



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalsivam Kamarajar"

# Stubble Burning

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**Why is in news?** Haryana to bring down fire counts substantially and will attempt near elimination this year, as per the Haryana State Action Plan for Management of Paddy Stubble Burning submitted to CAQM

In the last review meeting, Commission for Air Quality Management, (CAQM) further directed State Government including DCs concerned to **ensure effective, intensified and strict enforcement** of the District Plans and State Action Plan, with **special focus on hotspot districts** and keep a close monitoring on daily basis to eliminate stubble burning in the State.

Out of the 22 Districts of Haryana, in 09 Districts, the incidents of farm fires are nil or very minimal as per 2022 data on stubble burning.

In respect of 04 Districts namely Palwal, Panipat, Rohtak and Sonapat, farm fires incidents have been brought down below 100, last year.

The hotspot Districts where the farm fire incidents are more than 500 are Fatehabad, Kaithal and Jind. The other Districts of concern are Sirsa, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Ambala, Yamuna Nagar and Hisar.

Envisioning drastic reduction of stubble burning incidents in Haryana through effective enforcement of the State Action Plan, the **Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR & Adjoining Areas (CAQM)** has recently taken stock of preparedness of the Haryana Government to bring down stubble burning cases drastically during the paddy harvesting season of current year.

As per the State Action Plan, the total area under Paddy is estimated to be 14.82 Lakh hectares and a paddy straw generation of non-basmati paddy is expected to be more than 7.3 million tonnes.

## Stubble burning:

Stubble burning is the **practice of intentionally setting fire to the straw stubble** that remains after grains, such as rice and wheat, have been harvested.

Farmers resort to the practice due to the limited time they have between the harvesting of kharif paddy and sowing of the rabi wheat. They find it cost-effective and quick.

## Reasons for Stubble Burning:

The main problem behind crop burning is the **rotational cropping system** of rice and wheat where farmers burn stubble as they have to quickly clear the fields for the next crop.

Due to a **shortage of labour and time**, when paddy is harvested by a **combined harvester and thresher**, particularly by large farmers in Punjab, the machine leaves behind a significant length of straw and stubble on the field.

This prevents other machines from sowing wheat seeds and thus farmers often burn the stubble to quickly eliminate the paddy stubble.

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Farmers **do not have alternatives** for utilising them effectively.

The farmers are **ill-equipped to deal with waste** because they **cannot afford the new technology** that is available to handle the waste material.

With **less income due to crop damage**, farmers are likely to be inclined to light up their fields to cut costs and not spend on scientific ways of stubble management.

### **Impact of Stubble Burning:**

The major problems of the burning of crop residues are **pollution and greenhouse gas emissions** that lead to global warming.

Pollution from stubble burning has significantly **reduced lung function** and was particularly harmful to women.

The **concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub>** (category of unburnt carbon particles considered most harmful to respiratory health) were found to **increase more than twice** between the two-time frames.

During the crop residue burning period, a **two to three-fold increase was noted in most of the respiratory symptoms**. The highest number of respiratory complaints were reported by the elderly population (>40-60) and the lowest in the younger age group(>10-18).

**Soil degradation** is another problem due to the burning of crop residues. Burning paddy straw radiates heat that kills fungus and bacteria which is essential for soil fertility.