

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD. FIRE / EMS DEPARTMENT

TIPsheet

Subtitle 11-268 – Open Fires Burning, Recreational Fires and Portable Outdoor Fireplaces

NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT THE
PGFD/EMS DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH OFFICE AT 301-883-5250



UPDATED - SUBTITLE 11. FIRE SAFETY. DIVISION 4. FIRE PREVENTION CODE.

Sec. 11-268. Open [fires generally.] Burning, Recreational Fires and Portable Outdoor Fireplaces.

Open burning will be defined as a fire where material is burned on the ground or in an open receptacle without a chimney or stack. Small recreational fires, such as campfires, are considered open burning. Where permitted by the provisions of Section 19-104, and 19-105 of this County Code, burning by open fires shall be subject to the following conditions:

OPEN BURN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS:

Where open burning is being conducted under the terms of a permit issued by the Prince George's County Health Department, the permittee shall be personally responsible for the fire at all times.

The permit shall be in the possession of the person supervising the burning at all times. No persons shall kindle a fire upon the land of another without permission of the owner thereof or the owner's agent. A means of extinguishment will be available at all open burn sites.

The burning of materials of any kind on or within thirty (30) feet of any public roads, streets, highways, alleys, sidewalks, and public rights-of-way shall be prohibited at all times.

Garbage, dead animals, animal waste, tires, plastic, rubber, and other materials which create dense smoke or emissions injurious or noxious to people or property shall not be burned. It shall be unlawful for any person to kindle any open fire except cooking fires, or recreational fires without first notifying Public Safety Communications of such burning.

Except for those fires used for cooking food on property occupied by a single-family dwelling, open fires shall be not less than thirty (30) feet from any building or structure. A clear space free of ignitable materials not less than ten (10) feet in diameter shall be maintained around the fire.

Where burning continues for more than one (1) day, [the Fire/EMS Department} Public Safety Communications shall be notified prior to 8 A.M. on each day of burning.

RECREATIONAL FIRES

Recreational fires shall be no larger than three (3) feet in diameter. Recreational fires cannot be used to dispose of leaves, branches, brush or other vegetation. Only dry, natural wood may be burned in a recreational fire. Recreational fires will be prohibited during drought conditions, if winds are greater than twelve (12) mph or during an air pollution event (Code Red or Code Orange air quality.)

Fires in fixed or portable outdoor fireplaces, chimneys, and other similar devices fueled only by seasoned dry firewood and used in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines will be allowed, but subject to the following conditions:

A fire extinguisher or hose must be available during use. Fires must be at least thirty (30) feet from any structure. Fires are not permitted on any balcony or deck. Fires in these devices on or within thirty (30) feet of any public roads, streets, highways, alleys, sidewalks, and public rights-of-way shall be prohibited at all times.

Fixed or portable fireplaces or pits fueled by gas or propane used in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines at single family dwellings or townhomes will be allowed, but subject to the following conditions: The device must be attended at all times by a person eighteen (18) years of age or older, who is in direct view of the device. A fire extinguisher or hose must be available during use. Use on a deck is permissible, but the device must be at least ten (10) feet from the structure. The combustion area must not be in direct contact with combustible decking.

Open fires shall be attended at all times by a person 18 years of age or older who is in direct view of the fire until completely extinguished. The Fire Chief or authorized representative may prohibit such burning at any time it is determined that the kindling of an open fire creates a fire hazard. For more comprehensive information on the regulation of open burning and recreational fires, please contact the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department's Office of the Fire Marshal at 301-583-1830.