



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY VIRGINIA

BURNING REGULATIONS

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There are two recognized types of lawful burning requiring a permit.

1. Controlled Burning
2. Bonfires

Burn laws come from:

- Statewide fire prevention code
- Prince William County code
- State Forestry Laws
- DEQ regulation

DEFINITIONS

Open Burning

The burning of materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber. Open burning does not include road flares smudge pots and similar devices associated with safety or occupational uses typically considered open flames or recreations fires. For the purposes of this definition a chamber shall be regarded as enclosed when during the time combustions occurs only apertures ducts stacks flues or chimneys necessary to provide combustion air and permit the escape of exhaust gas are open. (SFPC 302 definitions)

Open burning shall not be utilized for waste disposal purposes shall be of the minimum size for the intended purpose and the fuel shall be chosen to minimize the generation and emission of air contaminants. (9.1-42 PWC code)

Controlled Burning

Controlled burning sometimes called silvicultural burning is the destruction and reduction of

land-clearing waste through an open burning process resulting from permitted land-clearing operations natural disasters and may include the use of an Air Curtain Destructor (ACD) and /or a Pit Incinerator (PIT). Furthermore the burning of materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber is classified as open burning. Controlled Burning is a form of open burning.

Recreational Fire

An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator outdoor fireplace barbecue grill or barbecue pit and has a total fuel area of three feet or less in diameter and two feet or less in height for pleasure religious ceremonial cooking warmth or similar purposes. (SFPC 302 definitions)

Bonfire

An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes. (SFPC 302 definitions)

A bonfire shall not be more than 5 ft. by 5 ft. by 5 ft. in dimension and shall not burn longer than three hours. (9.1-44a PWC code)

PERMITS

Recreational fires do not require a permit. (see definition for recreational fires above)

In accordance with the Statewide Fire Prevention Code a person shall not kindle or authorize to be kindled or maintained any open burning unless conducted and approved by the Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office.

A permit shall be obtained from the Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office prior to kindling a fire for recognized silvicultural or range or wildlife management practices prevention or control of disease or pests or a bonfire. Application for such approval shall only be presented by and permits issued to the owner of the land upon which the fire is to be kindled. (SFPC 307.2)

Burn permits are also referred to as Hazardous Use Permits and must be applied for by calling the Fire Marshal's Office at 703-792-6360 or obtaining an application at www.pwcgov.org/fire

under the [Fire and Rescue Code Compliance and Permits](#) section.

Permits do require a non refundable fee. (Please call or view website info. to see permit fees). Permits must be applied for and paid in full at least 72 hours before burning is planned to be conducted. (Sec. 9.1-40b PWC code)

LOCATION

Controlled burning shall be conducted as to maintain 1000 feet of clearance from any occupied building. Controlled burning shall not take place within 300ft. of any woodland. (Sec. 9.1-41 PWC code)

A bonfire shall not be conducted within 50 ft. of a structure or combustible material unless the fire is contained in a BBQ pit. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 50 ft. of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition. (SFPC 307.4.1)

Recreational fires shall not be conducted within 25 ft. of a structure or combustible material. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 ft. of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition. (SFPC 307.4.2)

FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Open burning; bonfires or recreational fires shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable extinguisher with a minimum 4-A rating or other approved on-site fire-extinguishing equipment such as dirt sand water barrel garden hose or water truck shall be available for immediate utilization.

BURNING THAT IS NOT ALLOWED

- Burning of leaves brush stumps branches ground cover and any other associated yard waste unless part of an allowable controlled burn. (see definition for controlled burning above)
- Burning of trash.
- Any other burning not approved by law and the County Fire Marshal.

BURNING RULES

- A. Burning from February 15 through April 30 may only take place between 4 p.m. and 12 midnight. This is due to State Forest Laws that are in effect during this time. During these times winds are usually calmer and the relative humidity is increased. (VA code 10.1-1142) Please see www.dof.virginia.gov for more information.
- B. Most burning from May through September is not permitted due to regulations set forth by the Department of Environmental Quality. Only recreational fires and bonfires are permitted. Bonfires will require a permit. (DEQ air regulations ch. 130) See www.deq.state.va.us/ for more information.
- C. Prior to the ignition and upon completion of any burning notification to the Prince William County Communications Center must be made at 703-792-6500. The location and permit number must be given at this time.
- D. There are many items that shall not be burned. These include rubber tires asphaltic materials crankcase oil impregnated wood any rubber or petroleum based materials construction debris hazardous or toxic materials commercial industrial or residential waste household garbage and animal carcasses. (DEQ air regulations ch. 130)
- E. Fuel for a bonfire shall consist only of seasoned dry firewood and shall be ignited with a small quantity of paper. The fire shall not be used for waste disposal purposes and the fuel shall be chosen to minimize the generation of air contaminants. (9.1-44b PWC code)
- F. Open burning that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke or odor emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous shall be prohibited. (SFPC 307.1.1)
- G. The Fire Code Official is authorized to order the extinguishment by the permit holder another person responsible or the Fire Department of open burning that creates or adds to a hazardous condition or objectionable situation. Burning may be suspended during unusually dry weather. (SFPC 307.3)

H. Permits may be revoked by the Fire Official if any of the above conditions are violated.

BARBEQUE GRILLS FIRE PITS & SIMILAR DEVICES

Construction of permanent barbecue structures and fire pits require approval from the Prince William County Zoning Department.

No charcoal cooker smoker grill or any flammable liquid or liquefied petroleum gas fired stove or similar devices shall be ignited or used on the balconies or spaces under balconies of multifamily dwellings nor in a similar manner in any occupancy unless approved by the Fire Marshal. These devices can be used at ground level if greater than 15 ft. from any structure. (9.1-45 PWC code)

Burn barrels steel fire pits and chimneys are permitted if used for recreational fire purposes. (see definition for recreational fires above)