

Before You Light It... Know Ohio's Open Burning Regulations

Why is open burning a problem?

Open burning can release many kinds of toxic fumes. Leaves and plant materials send aloft millions of spores when they catch fire, causing many people with allergies to have difficulty breathing.

The pollutants released by open burning also make it more difficult to meet health-based air quality standards, especially in or near large cities. The gases released by open burning can also corrode metal siding and damage paint on buildings.

What open burning is never allowed?

Under Ohio law, these materials may not be burned anywhere in the state at any time:

- garbage—any wastes created in the process of handling, preparing, cooking or consuming food;
- materials containing rubber, grease and asphalt or made from petroleum, such as tires, cars and auto parts, plastics or plastic-coated wire; and
- dead animals—unless approved for control of disease by a governing agency.

Other restrictions:

- Open burning is not allowed when air pollution warnings, alerts or emergencies are in effect.
- Fires cannot obscure visibility for roadways, railroad tracks or air fields.
- No wastes generated off the premises may be burned. For example, a tree trimming contractor may not haul branches and limbs to another site to burn.

Does Ohio EPA ever allow exceptions to the rules?

Under certain circumstances, yes. However, to burn a prohibited material or set a fire in a restricted area, you must receive written permission from Ohio EPA *before* you begin burning. This may take two weeks.

Can a community regulate open burning?

Yes. However, local ordinances cannot be less strict than the state law.

What happens if I'm caught illegally open burning?

Ohio EPA has the authority to enforce the state's open burning laws. Violations can result in substantial penalties. If you have any questions, or would like to report a suspected open burning incident, contact your Ohio EPA district office or your local air pollution control agency. See the map in this brochure for the agency to contact in your area.

Health Concerns

Burning household waste produces many toxic chemicals and is one of the largest known sources of dioxin in the nation. Other air pollutants from open burning include particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, lead and mercury.

These pollutants have been linked to several health problems, including asthma, respiratory illnesses, nervous system damage, kidney and liver damage, and reproductive or developmental disorders.



What You Can Do Instead of Open Burning

- Reduce the amount of waste you generate.
- Reuse items in another way.
- Recycle - Contact your waste disposal provider about curb-side pickup or drop-off locations for bulky or hazardous items.
- Compost yard trimmings and food scraps, while creating a natural, free fertilizer.



For a complete copy of Ohio's open burning regulations, contact:

Ohio EPA
Division of Air Pollution Control
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, OH 43216-1049
(614) 644-2270

epa.ohio.gov/dapc/general/openburning

Before You Light It...

Know Ohio's Open Burning Regulations

Open burning is any time you light an outdoor fire without a chimney or stack.

When burning refuse in burn barrels or open piles, the potential cost to your health, your home, your neighbors and your environment far exceeds the price of adequate collection services.

Protect yourself, your neighbors and your wallet by knowing the rules—what you can burn and where.

What can I burn?

The following open fires are *allowed* in Ohio →

	TYPE OF FIRE	INSIDE A VILLAGE OR CITY* if generated on property	OUTSIDE A VILLAGE OR CITY* if generated on property
	Barbeques, campfires cookouts	Wood stack no larger than 2 ft. high x 3 ft. wide. Use clean, seasoned firewood or equivalent.	Wood stack no larger than 2 ft. high x 3 ft. wide. Use clean, seasoned firewood or equivalent.
	Agricultural waste	Agricultural wastes and plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and material from crop or livestock production. This includes fence posts and scrap lumber, but does not include buildings, land clearing waste, dead animals or animal waste. <i>Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building.</i>	Agricultural wastes and plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and material from crop or livestock production. This includes fence posts and scrap lumber, but does not include buildings, land clearing waste, dead animals or animal waste. <i>Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building.</i> <i>Request permission from Ohio EPA if pile greater than 20 ft. wide x 10 ft. high (4,000 cubic feet). This may take two weeks.</i>
	Land-clearing waste	Not permitted in city limits.	Plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and crop residues. <i>With prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This may take two weeks.</i>
	Residential waste	Not permitted in city limits.	Plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and crop residues. Also wastes such as wood or paper products that are generated by one-, two-, or three-family residences. <i>Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building.</i> <i>Request permission from Ohio EPA if pile greater than 10 ft. x 10 ft. This may take two weeks.</i>
	Ceremonial fires	Wood stack no larger than 5 ft. high x 5 ft. wide. Duration no longer than three hours. Use clean, seasoned firewood or equivalent. <i>Must notify Ohio EPA in advance.</i>	Wood stack no larger than 5 ft. high x 5 ft. wide. Duration no longer than three hours. <i>No notification required.</i>
	Occupational fires: welding torches, heating tar, heating for warmth of outdoor workers and strikers	Use clean seasoned firewood. For example, a heating fire contained in a 55-gallon drum.	Use clean seasoned firewood. For example, a heating fire contained in a 55-gallon drum.
	Firefighter training, Explosive material disposal	<i>With prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This may take two weeks.</i>	<i>With prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This may take two weeks.</i>
	Horticultural, silvicultural, prairie management, range or wildlife management practices	<i>With prior notification to Ohio EPA. Notification required at least ten days prior to fire.</i>	<i>With prior notification to Ohio EPA. Notification required at least ten days prior to fire.</i>
	Disease or pest control	Local health department, Ohio Department of Agriculture or U.S. Department of Agriculture verifies to Ohio EPA that open burning is the only appropriate control method <i>and must notify Ohio EPA in advance.</i>	Local health department, Ohio Department of Agriculture or U.S. Department of Agriculture verifies to Ohio EPA that open burning is the only appropriate control method.
<p>* villages and cities are considered "restricted areas," which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within the boundaries of any municipal corporation; • within corporation limits and a 1,000-foot zone outside any municipal corporation having a population of 1,000 to 10,000; and • within corporation limits and a one-mile zone outside any municipal corporation with a population of more than 10,000. Call your local municipality for corporation boundaries. 			

Local Air Pollution Control Agencies

Akron Regional Air Quality Management District
(800) 589-2480
araqmd.org

Canton Division of Air Pollution Control
(330) 489-3385
cantonhealth.org/apc/

Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency
(800) 889-0474
southwestohioair.org

Regional Air Pollution Control Agency
(800) 458-2115
rapca.org

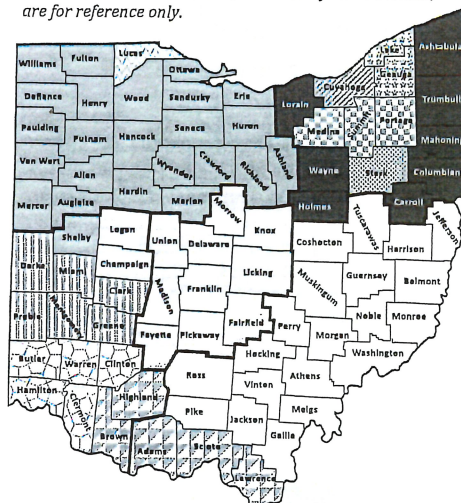
Lake County Air Pollution Control
(440) 350-2543
lcghd.org/?page_id=3687

Portsmouth Air Pollution Control
(740) 353-5156
portsmouthoh.org/health/air-division/

Toledo Division of Environmental Services
(419) 936-3015
toledo.oh.gov/services/public-utilities/environmental-services/air/

Cleveland Division of Air Quality
(216) 664-2297
clevelandhealth.org/network/air_quality/air_quality.php

The Division of Air Pollution Control's jurisdictional boundaries for district offices and local air agencies are not the same as Ohio EPA's standard district boundaries. Standard district boundaries, indicated by the dark lines, are for reference only.



Ohio EPA District Offices

- CDO Central District Office
(800) 686-2330* (614) 728-3778
- NEDO Northeast District Office
(800) 686-6330* (330) 963-1200
- NWDO Northwest District Office
(800) 686-6930* (419) 352-8461
- SEDO Southeast District Office
(800) 686-7330* (740) 385-8501

* Toll-free numbers are for calls within Ohio.

Each year, there are more than 1,000 wildfires in the state of Ohio. Wildfires in Ohio threaten and cause damage to homes, private property, trees and landscapes. More importantly, lives are placed at risk.

Most of these fires are preventable. Most of Ohio's wildfires are the result of arson and careless **open-burning** (burning of trash, debris and brush).

Ohio Law prohibits Open-Burning in the spring and fall.

Open-burning is particularly dangerous in the spring and fall, when the leaves are on the ground, the grass is not green and the weather is warm, dry and windy. **As a result, open burning in Ohio is prohibited in unincorporated areas in March, April, May, October, and November, 6 am to 6 pm.**

Prescribed fire can be used as a tool to eliminate undesirable vegetation and reduce hazardous fuel levels.

When managed carefully, **prescribed fire** (an intentionally or naturally ignited fire that burns under specific conditions; in a predetermined area, to attain planned resource management objectives) can stimulate the growth of native vegetation and reduce fire hazards brought on by the accumulation of dead vegetation.

Only Certified Prescribed Fire Managers can conduct prescribed fires in Ohio during the spring and fall.

To conduct a prescribed fire when open-burning is prohibited, an Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager must request a waiver from Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry.

Smoke waivers from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) are required for most prescribed fires and open burns.

Check with the Ohio EPA for more information on smoke laws in your area.

Questions?

To learn more about the Division of Forestry's prescribed fire regulations, visit:

ohiodnr.com/forestry

Or, contact:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry
1-877-247-8733
forestry@dnr.state.oh.us

Remember! To burn between 6 am and 6 pm in the months of March, April, May, October or November, you must be an Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager and you must have a waiver from the Division of Forestry.



Ohio's Fire Laws:

What you need to know about ODNR's fire laws before conducting prescribed fires & open burns in Ohio.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

What is the Difference between an Open Burn and a Prescribed Fire?

In Ohio, most outdoor burning in unincorporated (rural) areas is prohibited in the months of March, April, May, October and November between 6 am and 6 pm. This ban applies to both Open Burns and Prescribed Fires.

The term "Open Burns" refers to debris, brush and trash fires. Open burns are typically fires that are used to get rid of waste or debris. No open burns are allowed when the burn ban is in effect.

"Prescribed Fires" refers to fires that are intentionally lit, under predetermined conditions, to meet various resource management objectives, such as vegetation regeneration, forest fuels reduction, or wildlife management. Prescribed fires may be conducted during the burn ban, but only with the permission of the Chief of the Division of Forestry.

Outdoor burning in Ohio is regulated by:

- [Ohio Department of Natural Resources \(ODNR\), Division of Forestry.](#)
- [Ohio Environmental Protection Agency \(OEPA\).](#)

OEPA'S OUTDOOR BURNING LAWS:

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency regulates smoke emissions from outdoor burning. Contact your local OEPA District Office for more information on OEPA smoke regulations, or, online at: www.epa.state.oh.us

ODNR'S OUTDOOR BURNING LAWS:

[ODNR Division of Forestry law, ORC 1503.18, bans outdoor burning statewide in unincorporated areas in the spring and fall between 6 am and 6 pm.](#)

To help prevent wildfires, all open burning and prescribed fires are prohibited in Ohio in the months of March, April, May, October, and November, between 6 am and 6 pm.

[Section C of this law allows the Chief of the Division of Forestry to waive the ban.](#)

It is the Division of Forestry's policy to only waive this ban for individuals that have been certified by the Division as a Certified Prescribed Fire Manager. There is no charge for the waiver, but it must be requested in writing by the Certified Prescribed Fire Manager.

Waivers will only be granted for prescribed fires that have a completed burn plan in place prior to the burn. No waivers will be granted for debris, trash or brush burning, or any other kind of open burning.

[Interested in becoming an Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager?](#)

To be recognized as an Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager, you must either be qualified under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group as a Prescribed Fire Burn Boss, Type II OR complete at least one of the two following courses:

- Ohio's Certified Prescribed Fire Manager Course
- The Nature Conservancy's "Workshop on Ecological Burning"

The Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager course is offered annually through ODNR and covers various topics, such as:

- Laws, Rules, and Procedures Affecting Prescribed Fire in Ohio
- Ohio Fire Ecology
- Prescribed Fire Planning Process
- Firing Methods
- Smoke Management Techniques
- Burn Management
- Contingency Planning
- Fire Behavior Predictions
- Burn Plan Development
- Field Exercises

For information on upcoming courses, contact the Division of Forestry:

1-877-247-8733, or: www.ohiodnr.com/forestry

Checklist for Conducting a Prescribed Fire during the Spring and Fall:

✓ Become an Ohio Certified Prescribed Fire Manager.

All prescribed fires that are conducted when open burning is prohibited must have a certified prescribed fire manager on site.

✓ Complete a burn plan.

Burn plans must meet standards set by ODNR Division of Forestry and must be on-site and followed the day of the burn.

✓ Submit a request for a burn waiver from ODNR Division of Forestry.

This waiver is required if you plan to conduct a prescribed burn in March, April, May, October or November between 6 am and 6 pm. No waivers are granted during this time for open burns (trash fires, brush fires, etc.).

✓ Know and comply with your local OEPA smoke management requirements.

OEPA has detailed regulations regarding the smoke emissions from prescribed fires and open burns. Contact your local OEPA District Office for information and instructions on how to comply with these regulations.

✓ Wait until the weather conditions are right.

Burn only on a day where the weather conditions match those described in the plan.

✓ Notify local authorities on burn day.

When weather conditions permit the prescribed fire, notify local police and fire departments that you will be burning.

Know your OHIO Outdoor Fire Laws

Ohio Revised Code 1503.18 Regarding Kindled Fires

ORC 1503.18 is under the authority of the Ohio Division of Forestry.

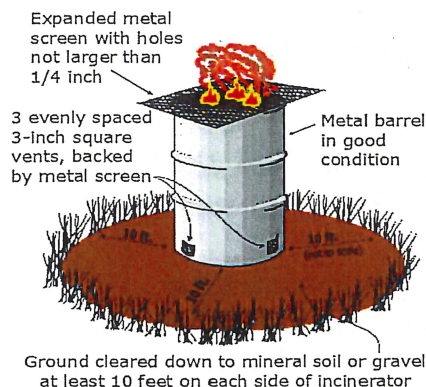
This law prohibits outdoor open burning statewide in unincorporated areas during the months of March, April, May, October, and November between the hours of 6:00 am and 6:00 pm.

This ban includes burning of yard waste, trash, and debris, even in a proper burn barrel.

During Spring, wildfire danger is high before plants have turned green, and in Fall, fire danger is high due to abundant dry leaves and dead grass. Warm, windy weather in both seasons also contribute to elevated fire risk. Always be sure to use a proper burn barrel when burning outdoors during legal hours.

Call your fire department for info about local burning regulations.

Call ODNR Forestry at 877-247-8733 with questions



Ohio Administrative Code 3745.19 Regarding Outdoor Burning

OAC 3745.19 is enforced by the Ohio EPA

EPA notification is required for many types of open burns in Ohio.

Call 614-644-2270 with questions or visit: www.epa.ohio.gov/dapc/general/openburning.aspx for complete rules and to find your local EPA office or air pollution control agency.

EPA Basics for Homeowners

Materials NEVER to be burned at any time or any place in Ohio:

1. Food Waste
2. Dead Animals
3. Materials containing rubber, grease, asphalt, or made from petroleum

OTHER RESTRICTIONS:

1. Fires must be more than 1000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building
2. No burning when air pollution alert, warning, or emergency is in effect
3. Fire/smoke cannot obscure visibility on roadway, railways, or airfields
4. No waste generated off the premises may be burned
5. No burning within village or city limits or restricted areas

**FOLLOW OPEN BURNING LAWS!
AVOID CITATION!
BE SAFE!**

Cooperative Education

Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry
1-877-247-8733
forestry.comments@dnr.state.oh.us
Follow us on Twitter @ohiodnr
www.ohiodnr.com



Ohio Department of Commerce
Division of State Fire Marshal
Fire Prevention Bureau
1-888-243-0305
TTY/TDD: 1-800-750-0750
websfm@com.state.oh.us
Follow us on Twitter @OhioFire

www.com.ohio.gov/fire



Regional Air Pollution Control Agency

Serving Clark, Darke, Greene, Miami, Montgomery and Preble Counties
117 South Main Street, Dayton, Ohio 45422-1280
V: 937-225-4435 F: 937-225-3486 www.rapca.org



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Dayton & Montgomery County

Anyone choosing to burn for the purpose of waste disposal must follow the terms and conditions listed below and comply with Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) [3745-19 Open Burning Standards](#). Failure to comply with these rules may result in possible enforcement action and revocation of open burning privileges.

RAPCA will be maintaining a list of addresses (see below) where residents have demonstrated and/or stated that they can meet the OAC rules and agree to the open burning terms and conditions. This list is being maintained as a courtesy to residents and local fire departments as to help alleviate any unnecessary fire squad calls.

Open Burning Terms and Conditions

- Maintain all fires in a nuisance-free fashion.
- Notify your local Fire Department prior to burning.
- Only clean, dry, untreated wood or other approved materials may be burned. See [OAC 3745-19](#) for a complete list of approve materials or contact RAPCA with questions.
- Burning of asphalt shingles, trash, tires, plastics, furniture, mattresses, building materials is strictly prohibited and all other prohibited materials. See [OAC 3745-19](#) for a complete list of prohibited materials or contact RAPCA with questions.
- Fire extinguishing materials must be on-site at all times.
- Do NOT burn during high wind conditions, please check with your local fire department if there are any questions.
- Open burning on Air Pollution Advisory days is prohibited. Call the RAPCA Airline at 937-223-3222, or visit the [RAPCA](#) home page, to find out if an advisory has been issued.
- Burn site must be located at least 1,000 feet from the nearest neighboring residence. Resident must recognize dry conditions and obey any state or local advisories and/or bans against open burning. Specifically, OAC 3745-19 does not relieve the resident of the ODNR Division of Forestry open burning requirements contained in [Ohio Revised Code 1503.18](#) which prohibit most prescribed/prairie burns and brush/waste disposal fires from being set in unincorporated areas between the hours of 6am to 6pm during March, April, May, October and November unless applicant obtains a waiver from the Chief of the Division of Forestry.

(G) Section 307 Open burning, recreational fires and portable outdoor fireplaces

(1) 307.1 General. A person shall not kindle or maintain or authorize to be kindled or maintained any open burning unless conducted and approved in accordance with paragraphs (G)(1)(a)(307.1.1) to (G)(5)(307.5) of this rule.

(a) 307.1.1 Prohibited open burning. Open burning shall be prohibited when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous.

Exception: Setting a back fire for the purpose of reducing the impact of a wildland fire as set forth in sections [1503.11](#) and [1503.22](#) of the Revised Code or from any prescribed burn operations authorized under section 1503.18 of the Revised Code.

(b) 307.1.2 Ban on open burning, recreational fires, and portable outdoor fireplaces. The state fire marshal, in the sole discretion of the state fire marshal, may issue a ban on open burning, recreational fires, or the use of portable outdoor fireplaces at any time when the state fire marshal determines that atmospheric or drought or other environmental conditions necessitate such a ban. The ban may be issued state-wide or may be tailored to a specific area, region or county of the state as conditions warrant.

(i) No open burning or recreational fires shall occur and no portable outdoor fireplaces shall be used in any area where a ban is in effect or at any time during a period when the state fire marshal has issued a ban.

(ii) No permit authorizing open burning, recreational fires or the use of portable outdoor fireplaces shall be issued during anytime or in any area where a ban has been issued by the state fire marshal.

Exception: A permit authorizing open burning, recreational fires, or the use of portable outdoor fireplaces may be issued for any area, if any, that is not subject to the ban.

(iii) Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit a local fire code official with authority to do so from issuing a local ban on open burning, recreational fires, or the use of portable outdoor fireplaces at any time when conditions warrant, including during times when the state fire marshal has issued a ban as long as the local ban does not contradict the ban issued by the state fire marshal.

(2) 307.2 Permit required. A permit shall be obtained from the fire code official in accordance with rule [1301:7-7-01](#) of the Administrative Code 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.

(a) 307.2.1 Authorization. Where required by state or local law or regulations, open burning shall only be permitted with prior approval from the state or local air and water quality management authority, provided that all conditions specified in the authorization are followed.

(3) 307.3 Extinguishment authority. Where open burning creates or adds to a hazardous situation, or a required permit for open burning has not been obtained, the fire code official is authorized to order the extinguishment of the open burning operation.

(4) 307.4 Location. The location for open burning shall not be less than 50 feet (15 240 mm) from any structure, and provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within 50 feet (15 240 mm) of any structure.

Exceptions:

1. Fires in approved containers that are not less than 15 feet (4572 mm) from a structure.
2. The minimum required distance from a structure shall be 25 feet (7620 mm) where the pile size is 3 feet (914 mm) or less in diameter and 2 feet (610 mm) or less in height.

(a) 307.4.1 Bonfires. A bonfire shall not be conducted within 50 feet (15 240 mm) of a structure or combustible material unless the fire is contained in a barbecue pit. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread within 50 feet (15 240 mm) of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.

(b) 307.4.2 Recreational fires. Recreational fires shall not be conducted within 25 feet (7620 mm) of a structure or combustible material. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet (7620 mm) of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.

(i) 307.4.2.1 Fire pits. Recreational fires conducted in gas-fired recreational pits shall not be conducted within 15 feet of a structure or combustible materials.

(c) 307.4.3 Portable outdoor fireplaces. Portable outdoor fireplaces shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall not be operated within 15 feet (3048 mm) of a structure or combustible material.

Exception: Portable outdoor fireplaces used at one-and two-family dwellings.

(5) 307.5 Attendance. Open burning, bonfires, recreational fires and use of portable outdoor fireplaces shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher complying with paragraph (F)(906) of rule [1301:7-7-09](#) of the Administrative Code 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.