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 material send millions of spores into the air 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. 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 waste 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, 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 can send toxic chemicals into the air, such as dangerous particulates, 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.

Environmental Protection Agency

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/openburning

Environmental Protection Agency

Learn More

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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

Local Air Pollution Control Agencies

Akron Regional Air Quality Management District
330-375-2480
www.scph.org/air-quality

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

Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency
513-946-7727
southwestohioair.org/269/Open-Burning

Regional Air Pollution Control Agency
937-225-4004
rapca.org

Lake County Air Pollution Control
440-350-2543
https://www.lcghd.org/air-pollution-control/

Portsmouth Air Pollution Control
740-353-5156
portsmouthcityhealth.org/pch-dept/air-division

Toledo Division of Environmental Services
419-936-3015
toledo.oh.gov/business/environment/air-quality

Cleveland Division of Air Quality
216-664-2297
clevelandhealth.org/programs/air/permitting/

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

CO Central Office
800-686-2330* 614-644-3020

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.

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. *Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building. Must notify Ohio EPA in advance.*	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. *Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building.* *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.*
Land-clearing waste	**Not permitted** in city limits.	Plant matter such as tree trimmings, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery and crop residues. *With prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This may take two weeks.*
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. *Fire must be more than 1,000 feet from neighbor's inhabited building.* *Provide notification to Ohio EPA if pile greater than 10 ft. x 10 ft. x 10 ft. This may take two weeks.*
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. *Must notify Ohio EPA in advance.*	Wood stack no larger than 5 ft. high x 5 ft. wide. Duration no longer than three hours. *No notification required.*
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	*With prior written permission from Ohio EPA.* *This may take two weeks.*	*With prior written permission from Ohio EPA.* *This may take two weeks.*
Horticultural, silvicultural, prairie management, range or wildlife management practices	*With prior notification to Ohio EPA. Notification required at least ten days prior to fire.*	*With prior notification to Ohio EPA. Notification required at least ten days prior to fire.*
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 *and must notify Ohio EPA in advance.*	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.

* villages and cities are considered "**restricted areas**," which include:

- 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.