



RECREATIONAL FIRES

Benton Clean Air Authority, 650 George Washington Way, Richland, WA 99352 509/943-3396

What does this mean?

This includes cooking fires, campfires, and bonfires using charcoal or firewood that occur in designated areas or on private property for cooking, pleasure, or ceremonial purposes. Fires used for debris disposal purposes are not considered recreational fires.

This information is intended to clarify when and where burning of recreational fires can or cannot be conducted. Recreational fires are exempt from the permanent ban on residential and land clearing burning in urban growth areas. A recreational fire does not require a burn day or a burn permit unless its size exceeds 3 feet in diameter and 2 feet high. Common sense rules for burning do apply.

PERMIT REQUIRED

Within the urban growth area, larger cooking fires, camp fires, bonfires, or ceremonial fires that exceed 3 feet in diameter or 2 feet high requires a permit from the Benton Clean Air Authority. Recreational fires outside the urban growth area should also comply with this size limit.

ACCEPTABLE FUEL

Only commercial charcoal or firewood can be burned in recreational fires. For a more enjoyable and less air polluting fire, seasoned firewood should be used. Seasoned wood should be dry and contain no more than 20% moisture by weight. A recreational fire can not be used as a guise for disposal of vegetative debris, which is burned with or instead of firewood.

GENERAL BURNING RULES FOR RECREATIONAL FIRES

➤ The fire must not include any prohibited materials. (See **PROHIBITED MATERIALS** section).

➤ Except for firewood, do not **haul** vegetative materials from another property where burning is prohibited in anticipation of using or disposing of it in a recreational fire.



➤ No fire may be ignited and fires must be extinguished during an **emergency burn ban** in a geographical area where:

- ◆ The Washington State Dept. of Ecology or the Benton Clean Air Authority (BCAA) has declared a period of impaired air quality or
- ◆ Appropriate fire protection authorities have declared a ban because of high fire danger.

➤ Fires are considered **unlawful outdoor burning** if they cause any or all of the following effects:

- ◆ Detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of any person.
- ◆ Causes damage to property or business.
- ◆ Causes a nuisance.

An unlawful fire must be immediately extinguished.

➤ A **person capable of extinguishing** the fire must attend it at all times, and the fire must be extinguished before leaving it.

➤ No fires are to be **within fifty feet** of structures.

➤ **Permission from a landowner**, or owner's designated representative, must be ob-

tained before starting an outdoor fire on someone else's property.

- **Restrict pile size** to no larger than 3 feet in diameter and 2 feet high at any given time.

PROHIBITED MATERIALS

The following materials may not be burned in any outdoor fire: garbage, dead animals, asphalt, petroleum products, paints, rubber products, plastics, paper (other than what is necessary to start a fire), cardboard, treated wood, construction debris, demolition debris, metal, or any substance (other than natural vegetation) that normally releases toxic emissions, dense smoke, or obnoxious odors when burned.

ALTERNATIVES

Although recreational fires are generally exempt, alternatives to burning a fire for recreational purposes are encouraged and include:

- Proper and appropriate use of propane or butane bottled gas devices for cooking or light.
- Electric lighting and cooking devices.
- For warming purposes, there are gas fired and electric infrared and forced air heaters. Clean burning and safety approved kerosene heaters are also available.
- A substitute for bonfires or ceremonial fires could include gas-fired devices.
- Solar-powered cookers and solar-charged battery-powered lighting is available.

MORE INFORMATION

Weed Control

- Yellow Pages: *Weed Control, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State Weed Association 509/547-5538
- Benton Co. Noxious Weed Control 509/786-6988
- Franklin Co. Noxious Weed Control 509/545-3847

Landscaping

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509/735-3551 or 509/786-2226 or <http://gardening.wsu.edu/eastside>
- Internet
 - Search Term: *xeriscape, low water use landscaping*

Chipping and Mulching

- Yellow Pages: *Tree Service, Lawn & Grounds Maintenance, Landscape Equipment & Supplies, Hardware – Retail*
- WA State University Master Gardeners 509/735-3551 or 509/786-2226 or <http://gardening.wsu.edu/eastside>

Landfill and Transfer Information

- Waste Management of Kennewick 509/582-5121
- Kennewick Transfer Station Kennewick 509/586-7555
- Richland Landfill 509/942-7498
- Richland Solid Waste Collection 509/942-7497
- Basin Disposal Inc. (Prosser, Benton City, and Benton County) 509/547-2476
- Ed's Disposal (W Richland and Benton City) 509/547-2476

On-Site Burial

- No restrictions in cities. Call if burying large amounts.
- No restrictions in Benton County on small amounts, larger amounts may need to be permitted 509/736-3086 or 509/786-5621