



RECREATIONAL FIRES

SCOPE

This publication outlines the Fire Prevention code requirements and prohibitions related to recreational fires kindled within the City of Winchester. This publication does not address bonfires, controlled open burning, charcoal grills and open flame cooking devices, or portable out door fire places.

Questions regarding the content of this publication should be directed to the Office of the Fire Marshal at 540-662-2298 during regular office hours, Monday thru Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OVERVIEW

A recreational fire is a constantly attended outdoor fire burning materials other than refuse where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, portable outdoor fireplace, barbeque grill or barbeque pit and has a total fuel area of 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes. Recreational fires are specifically exempted from the Fire Prevention Code definition on open burning and therefore do not require a Fire Prevention Code Permit (FPCP).

GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL FIRES

- The fire must be attended at all times.
- Adequate means of extinguishment must be on-site at all times.
- No flammable/combustible liquids or solids shall be placed in the fire.
- Must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and Local laws, rules, regulations, codes, and ordinances.

FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

- Recreational fires shall not be conducted within 25 feet of a structure or combustible material. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.

GENERAL PROHIBITIONS

Endangering Property Prohibited- In accordance with Section 307.8 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by the City of Winchester), no person shall kindle nor authorize to be kindled or maintain any permitted (i.e., allowable) fire in such a manner that will endanger the property of another.

Burning of Refuse Prohibited- In accordance with Section 307.1.1 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by the City of Winchester), the burning of yard waste, household trash, garbage, refuse, household debris waste, hazardous waste, impregnated lumber, junk, rubber, plastics, stumps, tires, tar based materials, oil or petroleum based products, products of salvage operations, chemicals, animal carcasses and similar materials is prohibited.

For information about the environment and health hazards related to burning refuse, including backyard and barrel burning, visit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) online at:

www.epa.gov/osw/nonhaz/municipal/backyard/index.htm

Ignitable Liquids or Hazardous Materials Prohibited- Combustible and flammable liquids, as well as other hazardous materials, shall not be used to aid the ignition of any open burning or recreational fire. Furthermore, the application, dispensing, or use of a combustible or flammable liquid, or any other hazardous material, upon or into the fuel used in any controlled burn, bonfire, or recreational fire may be considered an unauthorized release of a hazardous material and is strictly prohibited.

Offensive or Objectionable Fires Prohibited- In accordance with Section 307.1.1 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by the City of Winchester), any open burning that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke or odor emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous, are prohibited.

Hazardous Fires Prohibited- The Fire Marshal or fire department may order the immediate extinguishment of any recreational fire or open burning because of one or more of the following hazardous situations:

- Unattended fires
- Unprotected or uncontained fires deemed capable of spreading
- Inadequate fire extinguishing equipment/materials
- Combustible exposure hazards
- Inappropriate or hazardous materials used as fuel

FORESTRY-RELATED REQUIREMENTS & PROHIBITIONS

4 P.M. Burn Law- It shall be unlawful, under the direction of the State Forester, for any person to set fire to, or to procure another to set fire to, any brush, leaves, grass, debris of field containing dry grass or other inflammable material capable of spreading fire, located in, or within 300 feet of woodland, brush land or fields containing dry grass or other inflammable material, except between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and midnight.

Precautions against Spread of Fire- It shall be unlawful for any owner or lessee of land to set fire to, or to procure another to set fire to, any woods, brush, logs, leaves, grass, debris, or other inflammable material upon such land unless he previously has taken all reasonable care and precaution, by having cut and piled the same or carefully cleared around the same, to prevent the spread of such fire to lands other than those owned or leased by him. It shall also be unlawful for any employee of any such owner or lessee of land to set fire to or to procure another to set fire to any woods, brush, logs, leaves, grass, debris, or other inflammable material, upon such land unless he has taken similar precautions to prevent the spread of such fire to any other land.

(Code of Virginia, 10.1-1142-A)

For more information, visit the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) online at:

<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/index.htm>