

# OUTDOOR BURNING

## GUIDELINES FOR BONFIRES, OPEN BURNING, RECREATIONAL FIRES, CONSUMER FIREWORKS, BURN RESTRICTIONS AND BURN BANS



### **BONFIRES**

A bonfire is an outdoor fire used for ceremonial purposes as outlined in the 2003 International Fire Code Section 302.1. All bonfires **require a permit** from the Office of the Fire Marshal. They must not have a total fuel area greater than 8 feet in diameter and must be less than 6 feet in height.

Permitted bonfires must be at least 50 feet away from a structure or combustible materials and must **not** at any point move any closer to the structure than the stated 50 foot distance.

### **OPEN BURNING**

**Open burning is not allowed within the City of Colorado Springs.** Examples of fires that are classified as open burning are ditch burning, fires used for silviculture (forestry purposes), range or wildlife management, the prevention and or control of disease or pests.

Only city, county and state agencies with an approved Prescribed Burn Plan and Hazardous Activity Permit are allowed to pursue this type of activity.

### **RECREATIONAL FIRES**

**Recreational fires are allowed within the City of Colorado Springs in accordance with the guidelines outlined below and in the absence of a burn restriction or burn ban.** A recreational fire is an outdoor fire where materials other than rubbish are being burned and it is not contained in a permanent fixture (incinerator, outdoor fireplace, BBQ grill). The 2003 International Fire Code 302.1 defines these fires as being intended for cooking, warmth, religious, ceremonial or other special purposes. They must not have a total fuel area greater than 3 feet in diameter and must be less than 2 feet in height.

This type of fire must be at least 25 feet away from a structure or combustible materials and must **not** at any point move any closer to the structure than the stated 25 foot distance.

Outdoor fires in a permanent fixture (such as BBQs, gas-fueled fire pits, outdoor fireplaces) must be at least 10 feet away from a structure or combustible materials and must **not** at any point move any closer to the structure than the stated 10 foot distance.

### **CONSUMER FIREWORKS**

All types of fireworks with a fuse and or requiring a flame for ignition **are illegal**. Only novelty items (snappers and poppers) are allowed. A fire started by fireworks that threatens or damages property is a crime of Arson. Possession, use and or the sale of fireworks is subject to a fine up to and including \$500 and or up to 90 days in jail. Professional public and private firework displays are regulated, permitted and approved on a case-by-case basis by the Office of the Fire Marshal.

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## **ENACTING BURN RESTRICTIONS AND BURN BANS**

The Fire Marshal is the official that can enact a Burn Restriction or Burn Ban. When implemented, Burn Restrictions and Burn Bans apply to the **entire city**. Criteria used to determine when these conditions are initiated include; weather, fuel moisture, cooperater status, local and regional fire activity and national preparedness levels (which influences suppression aircraft availability). These elements are closely monitored by the Wildland Risk Manager and Fire Marshal and when predetermined criteria are met the appropriate condition is implemented. Immediate public notifications are made to the media through news releases. The chart below outlines what is **allowed** during Burn Restrictions and Burn Bans:

	<b>Allowed during Burn Restrictions</b>	<b>Allowed during a Burn Ban</b>
Blasting, Welding and Torches	Yes	No
Bonfires	No	No
Consumer Fireworks	No	No
Model Rockets	No	No
Outdoor Burning	Only approved Agencies	Only approved Agencies
Outdoor Cooking	Yes	Only on Private Property *See Below
Outdoor Smoking	Only in vehicles and where allowed in buildings	Only in vehicles and where allowed in buildings
Recreational Fires	No	No

\*During a Burn Ban outdoor cooking on city property (parks, open space, etc.) is **not** allowed. Cooking with gas or charcoal on private property with an approved manufactured appliance is allowed. Citizens are required to use responsible behavior and take special safety precautions while cooking outdoors during a Burn Ban.

## **BURN RESTRICTION AND BURN BAN PENALTIES**

Person(s) failing to comply with a Burn Restriction or Burn Ban shall be punished in accord with the general penalty of the Code of the City of Colorado Springs as amended (Ord. 92-147 and Ord. 99-151). A careless fire that threatens or damages property is fourth degree arson and shall be prosecuted as such.

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Can city residents burn leaves or trash outdoors? No, this is an illegal activity. Violations should be reported to the Office of the Fire Marshal at 385-5978.
2. Is burning trash in a fireplace allowed in the city? No, this is an air quality issue and violations should be reported to El Paso County Heath & Environment at 578-3199.