



Westminster Fire Department

Enforcement Policy: Open Burning

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

The hazards associated with open burning and recreational fires require the Fire Department to develop an enforcement policy that enables the hazards to be properly managed. To properly manage the hazards a clear understanding of the differences in the types of fires is essential. Section 307 of the 2015 International Fire Code (IFC) addresses four (4) types of fires:

Open burning fire

Bonfire

Recreational fire

Portable outdoor fireplace

Each type of fire is defined separately and subsequently each has differing requirements. This policy establishes the enforcement procedures utilized by the City of Westminster in addressing these types of fires.

DEFINITIONS (2015 IFC)

Open burning fire (permit required)

The burning of materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber. Open burning does not include road flares, smudge pots, and similar devices associated with safety or occupational uses typically considered open flames, recreational fires or use of portable outdoor fireplaces.

Bonfire (permit required)

An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes. A bonfire shall not be conducted within 50 feet of a structure or combustible material unless the fire is contained in a barbeque pit. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread within 50 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.

Recreational fire

An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, 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.

Portable outdoor fireplace

A portable outdoor, solid-fuel burning fireplace that may be constructed of steel, concrete, clay, or other noncombustible material. A portable outdoor fireplace may be open in design, or may be equipped with a small hearth opening and a short chimney or chimney opening on top.

Rubbish

Westminster Fire Prevention Bureau
9110 Yates Street
Westminster, Colorado
303-658-4500



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Combustible and non-combustible waste materials, including residue from the burning of coal, wood, coke or other combustible material, paper, rags, cartons, tin cans, metals, mineral matter, glass crockery, dust and discarded refrigerators, and heating, cooking or incinerator type appliances.

PERMITS

Permits shall be required for the following:

Bonfire

- Bonfire permits shall be limited to formal business and organizational events that are under the control of qualified supervision, meet the requirements as stipulated by the City of Westminster Fire Code and any additional safeguards required by the City of Westminster. Standby fire personnel and equipment shall be a requirement at all permitted bonfire events. The permit fee does not include the additional fees for standby fire personnel and equipment.
- Bonfires shall not be permitted where the fire cannot be conducted at least 50 feet from all structures or combustible materials. All conditions within 50 feet that could cause a fire to spread within 50 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition of the bonfire.

Open burning fire

- Open burning permits shall be limited to operations for silvicultural or the practice of caring for forests with respect to human objectives, agricultural crop and plant preparation and irrigation ditch control of weeds and brush.
- Permits shall not be issued for burning of brush, tree trimmings, grass, trash or other debris.
- Permits shall not be issued for the burning of lumber, wood products, or similar materials for the preparation of cooking or roasting pits.
- Open burning shall not be conducted within 50 feet of any structure and all necessary provisions shall be taken to prevent fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure.

The following do not require permits

Recreational fire

- Fires contained in an approved cooking or burning appliance shall not require a permit. The Fire Department shall have the authority to determine if cooking or burning appliances meet acceptable criteria to be classified as approved.



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- All recreational fires shall meet the requirements of the City of Westminster Fire Code and the requirements in Section 307.4.2 listed below.
- 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.

Portable outdoor fireplace

- Shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall not be operated within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material.
Exception: Portable outdoor fireplaces used at one and two-family dwellings.

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 fire extinguisher complying with section 906 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.