



Open Air Burning Law February 15-April 30

No burning until after 4:00 p.m. February 15 through April 30 of each year, if the fire is in or within 300 feet of woodland, brushland, or field containing dry grass or other inflammable material.

Fire shall not be left unattended if within 150 feet of woodland or dry fuel.

No new fires set or fuel added after midnight.

Law applies to campfires, warming fires, brush piles, stumps, fields of broomstraw and brush or anything capable of spreading fire.

The law provides for a penalty of up to \$500, plus payment of court costs and fire suppression costs if the fire escapes.

PENALTIES

Violations of any provisions of the Rockingham County Fire Prevention Code may result in your permit being revoked and is a Class 1 misdemeanor, punishable by confinement in jail for not more than twelve months and a fine of not more than \$2,500, either or both.

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS

The Rockingham County Fire Marshal's Office may ban open burning that is offensive or objectionable due to smoke, odor, or emissions, causes ash to fall on adjoining properties, or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous. The Fire Marshal's Office may order the extinguishment of any open burning that creates or adds to a hazardous or objectionable situation and may revoke active burn permits as circumstances dictate. Furthermore, the Virginia Department of Forestry may ban burning during high fire danger periods.



Rockingham County Department of Fire and Rescue
20 East Gay Street
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802
(P) 540-564-3175

firemarshalsoffice@rockinghamcountyva.gov

OPEN BURNING REQUIREMENTS



Rockingham County
Department of Fire &
Rescue

Permit Phone Number
540-564-8297

OPEN BURNING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

This information is provided to assist you in understanding the provisions relating to open burning. If you are located within an incorporated town you must check to see if there are more restrictive town ordinances.

Open burning must take place on private property and may only be done with the permission of the property owner.

WHAT IS OPEN BURNING?

The Code defines open burning as: The burning of any materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or a chimney from an enclosed chamber.

HOW TO OBTAIN A BURN PERMIT

You can obtain a burn permit by calling the Rockingham County Fire Marshal's Office at **540-564-8297**, Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

A burn permit must be obtained before burning and will be valid for 6 months. There is no fee charged for a burn permit and you are not required to come to the office to obtain a permit.

Prior to burning, you must call the Harrisonburg-Rockingham ECC at **540-434-4436** to activate your burn permit.

A PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Brush Piles
- Leaves
- Grass Clippings
- Tree Trimmings
- Garden Waste
- Weeds
- Similar Types of Landscape Waste
- Bon Fires
- Recognized agricultural or horticultural management purposes to maintain or increase the quantity or quality of agricultural or horticultural production.

NO PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Cooking Fires
- Smudge Pots or Similar Occupational Needs
- Recreational Fires

PROHIBITED BURNING

The Rockingham County Fire Prevention Code Prohibits the burning of household trash, waste, construction debris, rubber tires, asphalt shingles, plastics, rubber, vinyl, or similar items.

WHEN YOU MAY BURN

After obtaining your burn permit you may burn at anytime of the day, except during the period of February 15 through April 30 when the Virginia Department of Forestry's 4:00 p.m. restriction is in effect.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Location: Any material to be burned must be at least 50 feet from any structure, including power and utility lines. Provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure. Burning must take place on private property and may only be done with the permission of the property owner.

Attendance: Any open burning must be constantly attended until the fire is completely extinguished. This means someone must be at the fire the entire time it is burning. A fire left unattended even for a moment is likely to escape.

Management: The amount of material to be burned must be manageable. Large brush piles need to be broken down so that only a manageable amount is being burned. If the fire escapes your control you can be held liable for the cost of extinguishing the fire.

On-site extinguishment method: You must have on-site and readily available a means to extinguish the fire. This may include a fire extinguisher, garden hose, buckets of water or heavy equipment.