Brighton Fire Rescue District
500 S. 4th Ave, 3rd Floor • Brighton, Colorado 80601
303-659-4101 • www.brightonfire.org

Open Burning Rules and Regulations
FAQs

What is open burning?

Open burning is 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. For the purpose of this definition, a chamber shall be regarded as enclosed when, during the time combustion occurs, only apertures, ducts, stacks, flues or chimneys necessary to provide combustion air and permit the escape of exhaust gas are open. Generally, anytime you light a fire outdoors, you are open burning. Examples of these types of fires include open fire pits, burn barrels, burn piles, and ditch burns.

Before applying for an open burn permit, we encourage you to choose an alternative method of disposing of the materials. Please consider reducing, reusing, recycling, composting, or disposing at a landfill.

Who regulates open burning?

In Colorado, open burning is regulated at both the state and local levels. Before applying for a permit from us you should first obtain the appropriate permit from the state or county (IFC 307.2.1).

- Adams County – Apply with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) by going here https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe/openburn.
- Weld County – Apply with the county by going here https://www.weldgov.com/departments/health_and_environment/environmental_health/air_quality/burning_regulations.
- In the City of Brighton, Town of Lochbuie, and Commerce City no open burning is permitted besides exempt agricultural burns.

After obtaining the appropriate state or county permit, fill out our permit application by going to www.brightonfire.org/openburns IFC 105.6 and 307.2). Please be aware that your permit must be submitted no later than **12:00 PM noon the day before** you would like to burn. If you plan to burn on the weekend, this application must be submitted by **3:00 PM on Thursday**.

Once our permit has been issued, you must call us at 303-659-4101 before 10:00 am on the day of each burn or by 4:00 PM on Friday for weekend days. Please be prepared to give us the following information:
BFRD Permit Number
Burn start time and end time
Address or Location

Once issued, your permit will be valid under the following conditions:

1) The permit holder must verify that there is not a "red flag warning" before burning by visiting https://www.weather.gov/bou/firewxfcstmap and clicking on the appropriate zone.
   a. Weld County - Zone 243 b. Adams County - Zone 240
2) The permit holder must verify that there are not any restrictions or bans in place for the county prior to burning. Please check the Brighton Fire website (brightonfire.org) for current burn bans.
3) The permit holder must notify the fire district of their intent to burn before 4:00 pm on Friday if the burn will occur on a weekend.
4) The open burn shall not be located within 50 feet of any structure.
   a) 2.1. This distance can be reduced to 25 feet where the pile size is 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height and 15 feet when contained within an approved portable outdoor fireplace.
5) The open burn shall be attended at all times until fully extinguished.
6) The open burn shall not be conducted if local wind speeds exceed 10 mph.
7) A water supply capable of extinguishing the material ignited must be readily available on-site.
8) Open burning may only occur in daylight hours (dawn to dusk).

Please be aware that if at any time during the open burn operation a condition is created that is deemed hazardous by Brighton Fire Rescue District personnel, the responsible party may be ordered to extinguish the open burn operation.

What types of materials can be burned?

Untreated, natural wood (sticks and branches, no tree stumps), leaves, dry prairie grass, slash, weeds.

What type of open burns DO require a BFRD permit? What types do NOT?

Requires BFRD permit	Does NOT require BFRD permit
1. Agricultural open burning (even those exempt from State and County permitting) 2. Bonfires 3. Other fires larger than 3 feet in diameter and/or 2 feet in height not contained in a portable outdoor fireplace	1. Outdoor fireplaces 2. Recreational fires

***See definitions ***

What type of open burns are NEVER allowed?

1. Burning of material for which a practical alternative method of disposal exists.
2. Burning of material that contains food wastes, plastic, coated or treated wood products, rubber, insulation, tires, car bodies, insulated wire, motor oil, aerosol cans, hazardous or toxic materials, or other materials that will produce substantial amounts of smoke and particulates.
3. Burning of wood residue, which includes bark, sawdust, slabs, chips, shavings, mill trim, and other wood products derived from wood processing.

4. Burning of construction debris (includes both clean and treated wood).
5. Burning of buildings or structures for demolition purposes.
6. Open burning between the dates of November 1st and March 31st.
    a. Exemptions include recreational burning and fires in portable outdoor fireplaces

Can I burn in a burn barrel?

No, burn barrels are defined as incinerators using the definition given in the Air Quality Control Commission Common Provisions Regulation. Incinerators require Construction Permits and are subject to federal and state testing requirements and regulations. Incinerators are required by the EPA to have pollution control systems that reduce emissions. Burn barrels also do not combust efficiently, resulting in limited oxygen and lower temperatures that create smoke, odors and a variety of toxic pollutants like dioxins. Dioxins are known carcinogens and can increase the risk of both short-term and long-term health problems.

What about at my house? Do I need a permit to use my outdoor fire place or pit?

No, as long as they meet the definitions below for a portable outdoor fireplace or recreational fire.

My neighbor is burning in their backyard. Should I call BFRD?

As long as your neighbor is following the rules for portable outdoor fireplaces or recreational fires (see definitions below) they are not in violation of the fire code, we encourage you to work through the situation with your neighbor. We understand that this may be frustrating, however when we get dispatched to fires that follow the rules valuable resources are not available for emergencies that may occur. Below is a checklist to help you determine if your neighbor is following the rules and taking the appropriate safety measures:

- ☑ All instructions, suggestions and safety precautions provided by the device manufacturer are followed
- ☑ Prohibited items and materials are not being burned (see above list of materials)
- ☑ The open burn is attended at all times until fully extinguished
- ☑ The local wind speeds do not exceed 10 mph
- ☑ A water supply capable of extinguishing the material is readily available on-site
- ☑ There is not a “red flag warning” (https://www.weather.gov/bou/firewxfcstmap)
    - Weld County - Zone 243
    - Adams County - Zone 240
- ☑ Recreational fire is not within 25 feet of combustible materials or structures

Definitions

Agricultural Open Burning: Open burning conducted for recognized silvicultural range or wildlife management practices, for prevention or control of disease or pests, or for maintenance of water conveyance waterways and ditches.

Bonfire: An outdoor fire conducted for ceremonial purposes in which the fuel area exceeds dimensions of a recreational fire and are no greater than eight-feet in diameter and four-feet in height.

Open Burning: Any outdoor fire larger than a recreational fire or not contained within a portable outdoor fireplace. This includes but is not limited to campfires, bonfires, warming fires, the lighting of any fused explosives, permissible fireworks, the use of model rockets, and the burning of fence lines or rows, grasslands, fields, farm lands, ditches, rangelands, and wild lands. Permits from the fire district are required for open fires.

Recreational Fire: An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, portable outdoor fireplace, barbecue grill or barbecue pit and has a total fuel area of 3 feet (914 mm) or less in diameter and 2 feet (610 mm) 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 por-table outdoor fireplace may be open in design, or may be equipped with a small hearth opening and a short chimney or chimney opening in the top. These devices must be operated according to the manufacturer's instructions with all covers, screens, and grates in place.