



Recreational Fires

A MESSAGE FROM THE SPOKANE REGIONAL CLEAN AIR AGENCY

BACKGROUND

Recreational fires include backyard pits, free-standing devices, and pleasure, camp and cooking fires that occur in designated areas or on private property. Fires lit in fire pits, chimneas, fire bowls and similar free-standing devices, commonly sold at home improvement stores and mass retailers, fall under this definition. These devices are allowed throughout Spokane County as long as requirements are followed.

About Recreational Fires

Recreational fires may be no larger than three feet in diameter and two feet in height, and may not be used as disposal fires. A permit is not required, although requirements (outlined below) must be followed.

Social event fires are larger, restricted to public events or celebrations and require a permit. A permit application form and a \$55 non-refundable fee must be submitted at least 10 working days prior to the event. Contact Spokane Clean Air, 477-4727 for details and an application. The Spokane Fire Department also requires a permit for social event fires. Call 625-7000.

Rules to Follow

It's important that these rules are followed:

- Natural firewood only and it must be dry, clean and natural (untreated, unprocessed) or commercially manufactured fire pellets and fire logs.
- The fire cannot be used for disposal of anything, such as garbage, dimensional lumber, vegetation, paper, cardboard, etc.
- The fire may not cause a nuisance to your neighbor with excessive smoke and odors.
- Wood-fueled portable devices, fire rings and fire pits must be 25 feet from structures and other combustibles. Spokane Clean Air can enforce a 50 foot setback, per state rule WAC 173-425-050(6) (b), if smoke from the fire results in complaints from neighbors.

- Outdoor burning may be temporarily restricted by Spokane Clean Air due to poor air quality. During summer, burning is often restricted county-wide due to fire danger. These restrictions are issued by various fire and county officials. A sample notice is on the back. To find out current Burn Ban Status, call (509) 477-4710 or visit SpokaneCleanAir.org.
- Other rules may apply to the use of a recreational type fire, such as homeowner association covenants, rental agreements, etc.—so be sure to check your contracts and agreements.
- Building permits may be required for installing some types of recreational fire devices (gas/propane appliances). Check with your local building department.

Smoke & Your Health

Burning even natural, untreated fire wood emits smoke particles that can affect you, your family members and neighbors. Smoke contains toxic compounds. When inhaled, tiny particles collect in the lungs, causing structural and chemical changes, as well as damage to the alveoli (tiny air sacs where oxygen enters the blood stream). Those at greatest health risk from breathing wood smoke are young children, the elderly, and people with chronic heart and lung diseases.

Things to Consider

Spokane Clean Air discourages the use of wood-fueled recreational fires in dense, urban areas due to the likelihood of increased smoke and odor impacts to neighbors. There are many patio heaters and fire pits that use natural gas, propane or electricity.



FIRE DANGER BURN RESTRICTION

EFFECTIVE
June 4, 2021

Outdoor Open Burning and Recreational Fires are RESTRICTED

Unauthorized open burning and unauthorized recreational fires are hereby **ordered*** discontinued in the Unincorporated areas of Spokane County.

NO! NOT ALLOWED

- **All Recreational Fires** – any outdoor fire without a chimney such as a backyard fire pit or campfire using chopped firewood or charcoal
- **All Open Burning** – any open burning of fields and yard waste is prohibited at all times

YES! ALLOWED

- **Manufactured portable outdoor devices** – fire pits, chimineas, barbeques, and other devices used in accordance with manufacturer instructions
 - **Appropriate firewood** – clean and dry wood, charcoal, natural gas or propane gas
- Designated campfires in parks and campgrounds may be allowed as approved and determined by agencies with jurisdiction

Any person found with a recreational fire or conducting open burning who fails to take immediate action to extinguish or otherwise discontinue such burning when ordered or notified to do so shall be charged with a misdemeanor. (IFC 109; SCC 3.02)

Unauthorized open burning and unauthorized recreational fires are restricted until this Order is lifted or unless otherwise permitted by law enforcement or authorized agencies.



Sample Notice

» **QUESTIONS?** CALL 477-3675 OR VISIT SPOKANECOUNTY.ORG/722

*By order of the Fire Code Official, pursuant to Chapter 3 of the International Fire Code (IFC) as amended by WAC 51-54A, and Chapter 3.06 of the Spokane County Code (SCC), each as adopted by Spokane County; fire forecasting provided through NW Interagency Coordinating Center, Spokane County Fire Districts and National Weather Service.