



<http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dapc/general/openburning.aspx>

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Is there anything I need to do before I burn outdoors?**

There are some instances when Ohio EPA does not need to be notified or provide approval of open burning activities. However, you may have an obligation to notify or get permission from Ohio EPA before burning materials outside, depending on the materials burned, the location of the burn and the activity associated with the burn. Ohio EPA has developed a notification form [\[DOC\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#) that you can use to help make sure you are in compliance with legal notification requirements. Ohio EPA has also developed a form for requesting permission to conduct open burning [\[DOC\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#) when permission is required by law. You will find more information on this website about open burning, your responsibilities and helpful contact information if you need guidance or clarifications of what the requirements are in your area.

### **Why is open burning a problem?**

Open burning can release many kinds of toxic fumes. Leaves and plant materials send aloft millions of spores when they catch fire, causing many people with allergies to have difficulty breathing. The pollutants released by open burning also make it more difficult to meet health-based air quality standards, especially in or near large cities. The gases released by open burning can also corrode metal siding and damage paint on buildings.

### **What does Ohio EPA consider open burning? Isn't it harmless?**

Open burning is any set outdoor fire that does not vent to a chimney or stack. Some studies indicate that even small camp fires burning clean wood can emit harmful chemicals. Burning "unclean" materials can be even more hazardous. For example, when you burn refuse in burn barrels or open piles, the potential cost to your health, your home, your neighbors and your environment far exceeds the price of adequate collection services. Protect yourself, your neighbors and your wallet by knowing what you can burn and where.

### Where is open burning allowed?

Review this [general summary of areas where open burning is permitted](#). For more complete information, including special allowances for firefighter training, disposal of certain ignitable or explosive materials and recognized horticultural, silvicultural, range or wildlife management practices, **please be sure to consult the open burning regulations found in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3745-19 or [contact the appropriate staff member](#)**.

[http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dapc/regs/3745\\_19.aspx](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dapc/regs/3745_19.aspx)

### What open burning is never allowed?

Under Ohio law, these materials may not be burned anywhere in the state at any time:

Garbage, any wastes created in the process of handling, preparing, cooking or consuming food

Materials containing rubber, grease and asphalt or made from petroleum, such as tires, cars and auto parts, plastics or plastic-coated wire

Dead animals

Other restrictions:

Open burning is not allowed when air pollution warnings, alerts or emergencies are in effect.

Fires cannot obscure visibility for roadways, railroad tracks or air fields.

No wastes generated off the premises may be burned. For example, a tree trimming contractor may not haul branches and limbs to another site to burn.

### Does Ohio EPA ever allow exceptions to the rules?

Under certain circumstances, yes. However, to burn a prohibited material or set a fire in a restricted area, you must receive written permission from Ohio EPA before you begin burning. This may take two weeks.

### Can a community regulate open burning?

Yes. However, local ordinances cannot be less strict than the state law.

[Community Guide to Open Burning](#) [PDF]

### What happens if I'm caught open burning illegally?

Ohio EPA has the authority to enforce the state's open burning laws. Violations can result in substantial penalties. If you have any questions, or would like to report a suspected open burning incident, contact [your Ohio EPA district office or](#)

[your local air agency](#). Ohio EPA is represented by five district offices and nine local air agencies.

### **Open Burning Contacts**

Central Office Contact - [Paul Braun \(614\) 644-3734](#)

Portage County	Debbie Wallen	(330) 812-3945
Trumbull County	M-TAPCA	(330) 743-3333
Geauga County	Bert Mechanbier	(440) 350-2543

### **Open Burning Regulations**

Open Burning Regulations - [Ohio Administrative Code \(OAC\) 3745-19](#)

The Division of Air Pollution Control (DAPC) develops and enforces rules in the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). These rules assist the state of Ohio to:

- Attain and maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) contained in the Clean Air Act
- Fulfill the requirements set forth by the Ohio General Assembly in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 3704
- Protect and maintain healthy air quality for the citizens of the state of Ohio

Ohio EPA air pollution control regulations are located in the OAC in chapters 3745-14 to 3745-26, 3745-31, 3745-71 to 3745-80, 3745-100 to 3745-105, 3745-108, 3745-109, and 3745-112 to 3745-114. Additional chapters are added as needed to address new laws and requirements related to air pollution control.

### **Health Concerns**

Burning household waste produces many toxic chemicals and is one of the largest known sources of dioxin in the nation. Other air pollutants from open burning include particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, lead and mercury. These pollutants have been linked to several health problems, including asthma, respiratory illnesses, nervous system damage, kidney and liver damage, and reproductive or developmental disorders.

### **Burning Down the House (Fact Sheet)**