

Open Burning And Recreational Fires



Regulations for the city of
Sandusky, Ohio



What is open burning?

Open burning is the burning of unwanted materials, such as paper, trees, brush, leaves, grass and other debris, where smoke and other emissions are released directly into the air. During open burning air pollutants do not pass through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber.

Open burning pollutes the air and poses a potential fire hazard.

The air pollution created by open burning can irritate lungs, obscure visibility, soil nearby surfaces, create annoying odors or pose other nuisance or health threats.

Because of the problems created by this activity, state and local laws prohibit open burning of many materials. Many people are either unaware of the regulations or unsure about which regulations apply to them.

The fire official is authorized to order the extinguishment by the fire department. or the person(s) responsible.

What constitutes a recreational fire?

Outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, barbecue grill or barbecue pit and has a total fuel area of three (3) feet or less in diameter and two (2) feet or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar



purposes. Chimneys and Fire pits are allowable devices for recreational fires.

Use clean non-treated wood.

The minimum required distance from

a combustible structure shall be 15 feet (25 feet without commercial appliances).

Permitted burning includes:

- cooking for human consumption (barbecues, campfires, cookouts);
- heating tar;
- welding and acetylene torches;
- smudge pots and similar occupational needs; and

- heating for warmth of outdoor workers and strikers.

Use only clean wood and restrict the size of the fire so it can be contained in a 55-gallon drum.

Open burning, bonfires or recreational fires shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher 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.

*Regardless of permitted open burning or burning in approved containers, if the open burning is offensive or, in the opinion of the fire official, is considered hazardous it shall be **prohibited** and must be **extinguished**.*

By notifying Ohio EPA, and applying for a fire permit through the SFD, ceremonial fires (bonfires) can be set for limited periods of time. Fires must be limited in size to 5 feet by 5 feet and may not burn for more than three hours.

Recognized horticultural, silvicultural, range, or wildlife management practices, involving burning, are allowed with prior written permission from Ohio EPA. This permission may take two weeks to obtain.

Open Burning Alternatives

The City of Sandusky offers a program for the weekly collection and disposal of yard waste materials. At a cost of \$8 per month (or \$80 annually for 10 months) this program covers the period of April 1 through December 31.



If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding this service, you may contact the Division of Horticultural Services at 419.627.5879

For those residents who wish to deliver their own yard waste for composting, there will be a free drop-off at Barnes Yard Waste Recover announced in the Fall of the year.

Recycling centers for plastics, cardboard and paper are available at the city complex on W. Monroe Street and the city Greenhouse.

All SFD fire stations accept aluminum cans for the ACBC fund.



What will happen to me if I am caught illegally open burning?

Ohio EPA has the legal authority to enforce the 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, your local air pollution control agency or the Sandusky Fire Department.

For a complete copy of Ohio's open burning regulations, contact:

Division of Air Pollution Control
Ohio EPA
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049
614-644-2270

**If you have any questions
please contact:
The Sandusky Fire
Department
419-627-5837**

