


Outdoor Burning in Northeastern Washington

A Resident's Guide for Ferry, Stevens, and
Pend Oreille Counties

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For more information about outdoor burning in Ferry,
Stevens, and Pend Oreille Counties, please contact:

Washington Department of Ecology

Eastern Regional Office

N. 4601 Monroe

Spokane, WA 99205-1295

(509) 329-3400

Toll-free Air Quality and Smoke Complaint Line:

1-866-211-6284

www.ecy.wa.gov

Learn Before You Burn



If you are doing anything other than residential burning, your permit tell you whom to contact to find out if it is a burn day. For residential yard and garden waste burning ,you should notify your fire district prior to lighting any outdoor fire. It is always a good idea to burn only when the smoke is more likely to go up and away in the sky.

Avoid up
to
\$10,000
in fines.

One of the most common air quality violations is illegal outdoor burning. It pays to know the rules before you burn. Those individuals burning illegally are subject to fines of up to \$10,000 per day, per violation.

Resources and Contacts

Washington Agricultural Burn Hotline: 1-800-406-5322

Washington State Department of Natural Resources: 1-800-527-3305

Ferry County Waste Management: (509) 775-5217

Stevens County Public Works: (509) 738-6106

Pend Oreille County Public Works: (509) 447-4513

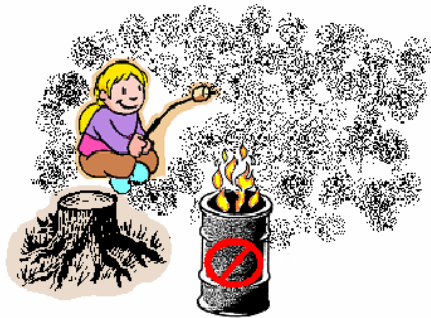


Prohibited Materials and Burn Barrels

Burning household waste and other garbage is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: cardboard, plastic, paper, treated wood, construction and demolition waste, plywood, chipboard, particle board, furniture, wire, tires, and asphalt. **It is only legal to burn unprocessed natural vegetations in Washington State.** In a recreational fire, only clean dimensional lumber may be burned.

In 2000, the state legislature placed a statewide ban on burn barrels. Therefore, even natural vegetation may not be burned in a burn barrel. Burning in a barrel limits the amount of oxygen that can get to a fire. This results in lower burn temperatures, incomplete combustion, excessive smoke, and more toxic substances being released into the air. The smoke from a barrel stays close to the ground, making it more difficult for people to avoid breathing it.

Did you know that smoke from burn barrels can aggravate your child's asthma?



Burn Bans

Contact your local fire department or the Department of Ecology before starting any fires. Occasionally, a burn ban is issued due to impaired air quality or extreme fire danger. Various entities may issue a burn ban, including Ecology, the Governor, the County Fire Marshall, and Fire Districts. To find out if the weather is forecasted to be good for burning in your area, call the Agricultural Burning Hotline at 1-800-406-5322. Listen to the recording for your county for the day on which you are planning to burn.





Let's Keep It Clean!

We take pride in our quality of life in the Inland Northwest. Thus, we all want to keep our air clean and healthful. In fact, the air we breathe today is cleaner and healthier than it has been in decades. Improvements in air quality are the result of a variety of actions, including the 1991 Washington State Clean Air Act. The Washington Department of Ecology encourages you to find ways to preserve healthful air quality. One good place to start is to know the outdoor burning rules and to always choose healthier and safer alternatives to burning.

Outdoor burning across the state is limited to unprocessed natural vegetation only. This brochure details the outdoor burning programs in Northeastern Washington, alternatives to burning, and the health effects associated with burning.

Why Shouldn't I Burn?

When burned, even unprocessed natural vegetation, such as lawn clippings, leaves, and pine needles, produce **air pollutants**, including **carbon monoxide** and **fine particulate material**. The small particles in fine particulate matter are easily inhaled into the lungs and can have serious impacts on human health. Those at greatest risk are also the most vulnerable citizens in our communities: the very young, the elderly, and those suffering from chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

Alternatives to Burning Yard Debris

- Compost yard waste yourself.
- Haul yard waste to your nearest recycling/transfer station.
- Design a landscape that allows debris to remain in place. Feature native trees and plants.
- Dispose of large yard debris by chipping. Encourage your community to invest in a community chipper. Rent a chipper alone or with your neighbors.





What Types of Burning are Allowed?

In 2007, residential and land clearing burning will be banned in most cities and towns.

- 1. Residential burning** is outdoor burning of leaves, clippings, prunings, and other yard and gardening refuse originating on the improved area of residential property and burned by the property owner or other responsible person. You may burn one 4' X 4' x3" pile of natural vegetation at least 50 feet from structures and 500 feet from forest slash. Your smoke cannot affect your neighbors. You must be in attendance and capable of putting the fire out while it is actively burning and/or smoking.
- 2. Land clearing burning** is outdoor burning of trees, stumps, shrubbery, or other natural vegetation so that the land surface can be developed or used for a different purpose. You may qualify for a permit if you are clearing one acre or less of land on a parcel that is five or more acres. Commercial entities developing residential property do not qualify.
- 3. Silvicultural burning** is burning of trees, stumps, limbs, needles, etc., generated on acreage beyond your improved yard area. This is regulated by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which can be reached at 1-800-527-3305.
- 4. Agricultural burning** is allowed by permit. A permit is required to burn orchard trees, open fields, and harvest debris. For information about agricultural burning, contact the Washington Department of Ecology, Eastern Regional Office at (509) 329-3400.
- 5. Recreational fires** include campfires, backyard barbecues, and chimeneas, which are allowed year-round. You should use only approved fuel. This includes untreated, bare, seasoned (clean and dry) firewood, briquettes, or propane. Fires must be no larger than **three feet in diameter** and must be attended at all times. **Disposal of vegetative waste in a recreation fire is prohibited.**

