



# OUTDOOR AND OPEN BURNING

Rules, regulations, and safe  
burning practices

## Outdoor Burning Restrictions

The following rules govern all burning, whether or not a written permit is required:

- No outdoor burning is allowed when the Gwinnett County Fire Marshal's office determines that it is a "NO BURN" day due to atmospheric conditions or local circumstances that make outdoor burning hazardous. This information is updated daily by 9:00am and can be found at [GwinnettFireMarshal.com](http://GwinnettFireMarshal.com) or by calling 678.518.4979. If outdoor burning is restricted, the conditions are also listed online
- Burning yard debris is prohibited on Sundays and at night. Compliant bonfires, cooking fires, and recreational fires in chimneas and outdoor fireplaces may be used at these times provided all other criteria and restrictions are applied
- Fires must be constantly attended by a competent person until extinguished. A garden hose connected to a water supply or other equipment capable of extinguishing the fire must be readily available for use
- Burning yard debris is limited to leaves, limbs, etc., that fall on a person's own property
- Burning solid waste and household garbage is prohibited
- Burning any material that emits a heavy dark smoke (rubber products, oils, roofing material, petroleum-based products, etc.) is prohibited
- Burning when smoke presents a health hazard to persons in the vicinity of the fire is prohibited. A Medical Burn Ban shall not supersede the exceptions noted by the Georgia EPD and shall be in accordance with the Gwinnett County Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance
- Burning within 20 feet of flammable, combustible, or explosive materials is prohibited unless otherwise specified by the Fire Marshal's office or by the fire code
- The Fire Marshal's office and Fire and Emergency personnel have the authority to summarily abate any conditions which are in violation of any of these provisions, and which may constitute an immediate threat to life and property.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division imposes a total ban on the outdoor burning of yard debris in Gwinnett County annually from May 1 to September 30.

Please verify daily after 9:00am that the outdoor burning of yard debris is allowed. You can check [GwinnettFireMarshal.com](http://GwinnettFireMarshal.com) or call the automated Outdoor Burning Information Line at 678.518.4979.

If you suspect someone is improperly burning, please report it by calling Gwinnett County's non-emergency line at 770.513.5700.

## Contact

Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services  
408 Hurricane Shoals Road NE  
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Phone: 678.518.4980

Burn information line: 678.518.4979

Email: [firemarshal@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:firemarshal@gwinnettcountry.com)

Website: [GwinnettFireMarshal.com](http://GwinnettFireMarshal.com)

*The information in this brochure is derived from the Gwinnett County Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance Article II Section 42-46.*

## Fires Requiring Written Permits

The following types of fires require a written permit issued by Gwinnett County.

### Pit Fires:

- Open burning at or on development sites for the purpose of clearing land for new construction
- A application, plat, or site plan showing the proposed location of the burn pit and information relating to the proximity of any occupied or un-occupied structure must be submitted to the Fire Plan Review office
- No burning shall commence prior to an inspection of the site and the burn pit by a representative of the Fire Marshal's office
- Upon approval, the permit shall be valid for a period of 30 days. Permits may be extended for increments of 15 days without additional fees, with a maximum of two extensions
- Daily outdoor burning determination must be followed for all pit fires

### Bonfires:

- Limited to activities sponsored by civic, educational, religious, or other group for the purpose of celebrations, etc.
- Prior inspection of the site by a representative of the Fire Marshal's office is required
- Must be no less than 50 feet from a structure with a size not to exceed 4 cubic feet of combustible material and no less than 100 feet with a size not to exceed 5 cubic feet of combustible material
- Shall be constantly attended by a competent person until such fire is extinguished
- A garden hose connected to a water supply or other fire extinguishing equipment must be readily available for use
- Fire department access must be within 500 feet of the bonfire

## Fires Allowed Without a Written Permit

The following types of fires do not require a written permit but must follow the outdoor burning ordinance restrictions.

### Burning leaves, limbs, and natural vegetation that may fall on one's property

- The location for open burning of natural vegetation shall not be less than 50 feet from any structure and not less than 25 feet from a property line. Provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure and 25 feet from a property line
- Fires should be a size that is easily controlled under the conditions and with the resources available on the property

### Recreational fires in commercially available outdoor fireplaces or Chimineas:

- Chimineas or outdoor fireplaces shall be used according to their intended use, the manufacturer's recommendations
- Chimineas or outdoor fireplaces shall have a chimney, screen, or other approved method to arrest sparks
- Chimineas or outdoor fireplaces shall not be operated inside structures, on combustible services or balconies, or within 25 feet of combustible construction
- Chimineas or outdoor fireplaces shall have a non-combustible surface underneath to safely catch sparks or dropping coals and ashes
- Untreated wood, lumber, manufactured fire logs, or charcoal shall be the only materials or substances permitted to be burned
- Burning when smoke presents a health hazard to persons in the vicinity of the fire is prohibited. A Medical Burn Ban shall not supersede the exceptions noted by the Georgia EPD and shall be in accordance with the Gwinnett County Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance

### Fires for the purpose of keeping warm

- Warming fires must be contained within a metal barrel of 55 gallon capacity or less
- Untreated wood or lumber are the only materials or substances permitted to be burned
- No on-ground warming fires are permitted
- The container for the warming fire cannot be less than 50 feet from any structure
- The outside temperature shall be 50° F or less

### Fires used to cooking food for human consumption

- Charcoal, wood, and gas grills and other open flame cooking devices shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction with the exception of one and two family dwellings
- LP gas grills and burners having an LP gas container with a water capacity greater than 2.5 pounds (1-pound LP gas capacity) shall not be located on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction with the exception of one and two family dwellings
- Open fires used for cooking must be more than 50 feet from any structure and provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading

## How to extinguish your outdoor fire:

- Allow natural vegetation to burn completely to ash
- Douse the fire area with enough water to extinguish all embers, not just the red ones
- Stir the fire with a shovel to expose any smoldering embers, scrape any ashes and embers from sticks and logs, and douse the fire area again
- Stir to ensure that everything is wet and cool to the touch
- If you do not have water, use dirt; mix enough dirt or sand with the embers and continue adding and stirring until all material is cool

**Caution:** Do not bury an outdoor fire. The fire will continue to smolder. Tree roots could catch on fire, surface, and start a wildland fire. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave!