
General Safety Practices

- Do not use during a high wind condition.
- All wood burning devices must be equipped with either a chimney (flue) or spark screen.
- The fireplace should be located on a non-combustible surface such as a brick or concrete patio.
- Burning leaves, trash or yard debris is **NOT** permitted.
- The fire must be attended at all times. If the fire is to be left unattended, it must be extinguished.
- Never use a flammable liquid to start the fire.
- Prior to removing ashes, allow them to cool for at least twenty four (24) hours. Keep the ashes in a metal waste can with a tight fitting metal lid and keep it AWAY FROM THE HOUSE.
- Keep your neighbors in mind while burning outdoors. Smoke and other products of combustion can have an impact on surrounding yards and be drawn into neighboring houses.



For further information or questions feel free to contact us.

Merchantville Fire Department

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Open Burning, Recreational Fire and Portable Outdoor Fire Places



As the weather begins to get nicer you and your family may be moving to the outdoors to gather around a fire. There are some things to keep in mind however.

Fire Pit Checklist

- Recreational fire is not within 25 feet of combustible material or 15 feet if contained in an approved container.
- Fire does not exceed permitted size of 3 feet diameter and 2 feet height.
- Using proper material to burn. (Seasoned, clean dry fire wood.)
- Appropriate extinguishing device close by fire pit. (4A rated extinguisher or garden hose.)
- Fire does not create a hazardous condition or nuisance to neighbors.

Recreational Fire Guidelines

- Fire pits are not permitted to be on a sidewalk, street, front yard or balcony.
- Only small fires are allowed (maximum 3-foot diameter by 2-foot height) that are contained in a non-combustible chiminea, outdoor fireplace, fire pit, or other approved method for the purpose of pleasure, cooking, warmth or other similar purpose. (307.4)
- All openings in the container must be covered with wire mesh or other screening materials that will prevent the passage of sparks and embers.
- Only seasoned fire wood may be used, ignited by a small amount of paper, as fuel for outdoor fires. The fire must not be used for waste disposal purposes and a fuel shall be chosen to minimize the amount of air contaminants. (307.4.1.2)
- Fires must be kept at least 15 feet from structures. (307.4.2)
- A portable fire extinguisher with a minimum of a 4A rating or garden hose, bucket of sand or other suitable means for extinguishing the fire must be provided. (307.5)
- The fire must not become a nuisance to neighbors.

Frequently Asked Questions

- I'm concerned when my neighbors use their outdoor fireplaces in their backyards. They follow all regulations, but the smoke bothers me. What can I do? The Fire Department can order any fire to be extinguished that doesn't comply with all regulations, creates a hazardous condition, or poses a health risk. We generally will not intervene if there is only an unpleasant odor or drifting smoke.
- What is an approved container? Commercially manufactured chiminea's, outdoor fireplaces and fire pits that do not exceed the permitted 3 foot diameter and 2 feet in height. Some examples are below:



- Do I need a permit to have a recreational fire pit? The Merchantville Bureau of Fire Prevention does not require a homeowner to acquire a permit to have a fire pit in their yard but **commercial property owners** must obtain a Type 1 permit.