

Learn About It

In South Carolina, burning has been a common way to get rid of leaves and tree limbs, to clear farm lands, and to manage wildlife areas. However, smoke from open burning can pollute the air and cause health problems. That is why there are State laws to limit outdoor burning.

Open Burning – is the burning of any material in an open fire or an outdoor container when specifically designed equipment is not used to control the combustion or air pollution from the fire.

South Carolina allows certain kinds of open burning if the burning does not cause problems and if it is not prohibited by local governments. Call the nearest Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) Environmental Quality Control district office listed on the back of this brochure for information on laws about burning in your area.

You may also need to notify the SC Forestry Commission before you begin to burn.

- For open burning of yard debris outside city or town limits, you should call the toll-free number for the county in which you live. A list of these numbers can be found on the internet at: www.state.sc.us/forest/fire.htm.
- If you plan to burn anything else, call the Forestry Commission at: 1-800-777-3473.
- Remember, even though you may have a notification number from the Forestry Commission, you must still follow DHEC's rules for open burning.

It is illegal to open burn:

-  Household garbage and trash
-  Paper
-  Motor and waste heating oils
-  Asphaltic materials (shingles, tar)
-  Tires and other rubber products
-  Building materials unless burning untreated wood at a construction site
-  Plastics
-  Paints
-  Household chemicals
-  Agricultural chemicals
-  Electrical wire, or any material for its metal content

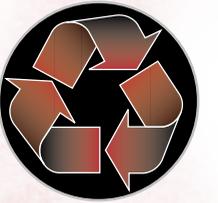


The following types of fires are allowed by state laws, but local laws may prohibit them:

-  Burning of your yard waste such as leaves, grass, weeds, and tree clippings grown on the property where it is burned
-  Campfires and fires for recreational purposes
-  Outdoor fires to cook food
-  Fires for control of agricultural diseases, weeds and pests, plant overgrowth, or land clearing following rules acceptable to DHEC
-  Planned burning of forests to decrease impact of wildfires (*prescribed burning*)

Remember! When lawfully burning materials outdoors, a smoke nuisance must not be created. Fires from land clearing operations must be at least 1,000 feet from public roadways and other occupied structures.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



There are cleaner and easier ways to dispose of waste rather than burning it.

- To help reduce yard waste, consider chipping, shredding, and composting. Many areas have curbside pickup for yard waste.
- Newspapers are recyclable.
- Used oil can be taken to a recycling center.
- Some counties schedule a day each year to collect hazardous household chemicals.

Call your DHEC Environmental Quality Control district office for additional information on recycling centers in your community, or call 1-800-SO-USE-IT for the State Recycling Center.

Think About It

Open burning can cause health problems for you and your neighbors. The air pollution from open burning can be a special concern for children and people with respiratory diseases like asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. You can help keep South Carolina's air clean by following the rules for open burning and finding healthy alternatives to burning.

For more information about open burning regulations (SC Air Pollution Reg. 61-62.2, printed on the back of this brochure) call your DHEC Environmental Quality Control district office.

OPEN BURNING IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BELOW:

A Open burning of leaves, tree branches or yard trimmings originating on the premises of private residences and burned on those premises is allowed.

B Open burning in connection with the preparation of food for immediate consumption is allowed.

C Campfires and fires used solely for recreational purposes, ceremonial occasions, or human warmth are allowed.

D Fires purposely set to forest lands for specific management practices in accordance with guidelines acceptable to the Department and as administered by the South Carolina Forestry Commission. Such management practices shall include:

1. Prescribed burning under existing standards for various management objectives; and
2. Site preparation burning for purposes of clearing an area for regeneration.

E Fires purposely set for agricultural control of diseases, weeds, pests, and for other specific agricultural purposes in accordance with practices acceptable to the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

F Open burning of trees, brush, grass and other vegetable matter for game management purposes in accordance with practices acceptable to the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

G Open burning in areas other than predominantly residential for the purpose of land clearing or right-of-way maintenance. This will be exempt only if the following minimum conditions are followed:

1. The location of the burning must be a sufficient distance but not less than 1000 feet from public roadways and all residential, commercial, and industrial sites not a part of the contiguous property on which the burning is conducted;
2. Winds during the time of the burning must be away from any area in which the ambient air may be significantly affected by smoke from the burning if that area contains a public roadway or a residential, commercial, or industrial site;

3. The amount of dirt on the material being burned must be minimized;

4. No heavy oils, asphaltic materials, items containing natural or synthetic rubber, or any materials other than plant growth may be burned;

5. The initial burning must be started only between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.; no combustible material may be added to the fire between 3:00 p.m. of one day and 9:00 a.m. the following day;

6. No more than two piles 30 ft. x 30 ft. or equivalent may be burned within a six-acre area at one time; and

7. In the case of land clearing, all salvageable timber and pulpwood must be removed.

H Fires set for the purposes of training public fire-fighting personnel when authorized by the appropriate governmental entity, and fires set by a private industry as a part of an organized program of drills for the training of firefighting personnel. These will be exempt only if the drills are solely for the purpose of fire-fighting training and the duration of the burning is held to the minimum required for such purposes. Prior approval is required for sites which are not established training sites.

I Open burning of household trash on the premises of and originating from private residences where services for the disposal of such materials are not available. The location of such burning must be at least 500 feet from any inhabited building.

J Open burning on the property where it occurs of construction waste from building and construction operations will be exempt only if the following conditions are met:

1. The location of the burning is at least 500 feet from any occupied structure other than a dwelling or structure located on the property on which the burning is conducted;

2. Heavy oils, asphaltic materials, items containing natural or synthetic rubber, or any other trade wastes which produce smoke in excess of 40 percent opacity are not burned; and

3. The burning is conducted only between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

K Open burning, in remote or specified areas:

1. Of trade waste provided the burning is conducted in accordance with Paragraph G of this regulation. Such burning must be of a non-recurring nature.

2. For non-recurring unusual circumstances.

3. For experimental burning for purposes of data gathering and research.

However, prior approval for these types of burning (in subparagraph K) must be obtained from the Department.

Open burning may be conducted in certain situations if no undesirable levels are or will be created. The authority to conduct open burning under this Regulation does not exempt or excuse the person responsible for the burning from the consequences of, or the damages or injuries resulting from the burning and does not exempt or excuse anyone from complying with other applicable laws and with ordinances, regulations, and orders of governmental entities having jurisdiction, even though the burning is otherwise conducted in compliance with this Regulation.

The Department reserves the right to impose other or different restrictions and exemptions on open burning in addition to those enumerated above, whenever in the judgement of the Department such is necessary to realize the purpose of this Regulation.

A written report or warning to a person of a violation at one site shall be considered adequate notice of the regulation and subsequent observed violations at the same or different site will result in appropriate legal action.

DISTRICT OFFICES

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Phone: (864) 241-1090
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Appalachia III EQC
975-C N. Church Street
Spartanburg, SC 29303-2712
Phone: (864) 596-3800
Fax: (864) 596-2136

Catawba EQC
2475 DHEC Road
Lancaster, SC 29720
Phone: (803) 285-7461
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Central Midlands EQC
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State Park, SC 29147
Phone: (803) 896-0620
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Burton, SC 29906
Phone: (843) 846-1030
Fax: (843) 846-0604

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206 Beaufort Street, NE
Aiken, SC 29801
Phone: (803) 641-7670
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www.scdhec.net/baq



CR-002769 MAC 9/02

Learn before you Burn

A
GUIDE
TO
OPEN
BURNING