

FIRE PITS IN LOUISVILLE AND JEFFERSON COUNTY

A **Fire Pit** is an acceptable permanent or portable outdoor receptacle or device that meets certain specifications.

The Air Pollution Control District wants you to enjoy your recreational fires safely and with as few emissions as possible. We have listed some guidelines to help you determine what kind of fire pit you should purchase or build, and where you should place it on your property.

Although recreational fires in acceptable pits are generally allowed without a permit, you cannot burn when there is an Air Quality Alert in effect, when there is a burn ban in effect, or when the wind is expected to exceed 15 MPH.

Please be mindful of your neighbors. APCD regulations prohibit excessive smoke and odors from becoming a nuisance.



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MANUFACTURED FIRE PITS

Manufactured fire pits are now widely available. Although you can purchase just about any size or shape, certain Air Pollution Control District specifications must be met.



The height of a fire pit should not exceed 3 feet from the ground or surface upon which it rests.



The inside width, or burn area, cannot exceed 3 feet wide by 3 feet long, or 3 feet in diameter for round pits.

CONSTRUCTED OR PERMANENTLY BUILT FIRE PITS

In order to be used without a permit, permanently constructed fire pits need to meet certain specifications. Fire pit height cannot exceed 3 feet, and the fire pit opening, or burn area, cannot be larger than 3 feet wide by 3 feet long, or 3 feet in diameter.

It must have enclosed sides made from brick, block, stone, heavy-gauge metal, or some other APCD-approved non-combustible material, and be built in such a way that the pit becomes a permanent structure.



Call (502) 574-6000 if you are not sure if your planned fire pit meets APCD specifications.

Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District
701 W. Ormsby Ave., Ste. 303
Louisville, Ky. 40203
(502) 574-6000 Fax: (502) 574-5306

OPEN BURNING REGULATIONS

Louisville/Jefferson County



AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is open burning prohibited?

Burning produces particulate matter that adversely impacts our air quality. It causes irritation to the lungs and decreases breathing capabilities for people with lung problems. It especially affects seniors, young children, and people with lung disease.

Can I have a campfire in my backyard?

Recreational fires are allowed. However, a permit may be required. Call 574-6000 and ask if you need a recreational burn permit.

When do I need a permit?

You need a permit if you are having a bonfire or recreational fire that is on the ground and not contained in an acceptable fire pit or fireplace. Permits are available online at louisvilleky.gov/apcd. We can also fax or mail one to you if you call 574-6000 to request a permit application.



Which fires don't need a permit?

If you are grilling or cooking food for non-commercial purposes, and the fire is the appropriate size for what you are cooking, you will not need a permit. Recreational fires in a fire pit or outdoor fireplace do not require permits if they fall within the size requirements—3 feet wide by 3 feet long by 3 feet tall. If you have questions, call (502) 574-6000.

Should I notify the fire department?

Louisville urban and suburban fire districts want to be notified when you are going to have a recreational fire, bonfire, or agricultural burn. You may need to supply your fire district with a burn permit application as well.

STORM DEBRIS DISPOSAL

Can I dispose of tree debris from storms or flooding by burning it?

No. Burning storm and/or flood debris is prohibited. After major weather events, check with Metro Call (311) or www.louisvilleky.gov to find out if there are any special allowances made for disposal at local recycling centers or landfills.

Renting a chipper to turn limbs and branches into mulch for your yard is a great way to recycle those trees. You may also contact a professional to dispose of the tree debris.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR OPEN BURNING

- Recreational bonfires should be no more than 5 feet wide by 5 feet long by 5 feet high.
- Recreational fires should be no more than 3 feet wide by 3 feet long by 3 feet high.
- Always have water nearby to put out your fire.
- Always contact the fire department 2 hours prior to starting the fire to notify it of your intent to burn.
- Use only clean, dry firewood.
- No accelerants should be used to start the fire.
- Do not burn on Air Quality Alert days, or when there is a county, regional or statewide burn ban in effect. Contact the Air Pollution Control District for more information.
- Do not burn if the wind is expected to exceed 15 MPH.
- Unless it is in an approved fire pit, you must obtain a permit for any recreational or agricultural burn.
- For more information, review Regulation 1.11 on Open Burning at www.louisvilleky.gov/apcd.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRE PITS

- Placement of a fire pit is as important as how it is constructed. Safety always comes first.
- The fire pit should not be placed on a wooden deck or other combustible surface. Do not place on a balcony.
- The state fire code requires fire pits to be located at least 50 feet from buildings, property lines, and combustible materials.
- Use only clean, dry firewood. Do not burn yard waste, debris, or trash of any kind. Do not use accelerants.
- The fire should be attended by a responsible adult at all times.
- Don't burn if the wind is expected to exceed 15 MPH.
- Your fire pit should have a screen or spark arrestor.
- Always have water handy to put out the fire.

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