

Frequently Asked Questions About Open Burning*

Q. Am I allowed to burn household waste?

A. No. The burning of household waste is not permitted anywhere in the Township.

Q. How can I get a burn permit?

A. You must first obtain a Master burn permit in person at the Township office. Once you have a master permit on file you will be given a user name and password which you will then use to activate your permit, each time you burn, on the Township website or by calling the Township office at 517-655-3193 during office hours.

Q. When am I allowed to burn with a burn permit?

A. The zone of the property and/or the subdivision in which it is located dictates the number and days you are permitted to burn. Please refer to the table on the website or call the Township at 517-655-3193 if you have further questions.

Q. What am I allowed to burn with a burn permit?

A. You may burn yard debris other than grass or leaves (i.e., brush, limbs, and dead plant growth).

Q. Am I allowed to burn construction materials?

A. No. The burning of construction material is not permitted. All “construction and demolition” waste should be disposed of in a landfill that accepts construction and demolition waste.

Q. Am I allowed to destroy a structure on my property by open burning?

A. No. You may not destroy a standing structure such as a barn or abandoned building by open burning, even if it is to be conducted on your own property. Air Quality rules specifically state that a structure may be burned for fire prevention training ONLY. A structure should not be intentionally burned for any other purpose.

Q. Am I allowed to burn the remnants of a demolished structure on my property?

A. No. You may not burn a demolished structure for disposal purposes. This is considered to be “construction and demolition” waste and should be disposed of in a landfill that accepts construction and demolition waste.

Q. What if I am not the property owner?

A. The property owner shall obtain the master permit. The owner at that time may authorize others to be listed on the permit. Each person listed will need to submit proof of identity (license) before requesting activation of the permit.

Q. What are alternatives to burning or landfilling leaves and grass clippings?

A. Listed are the most often used methods:

1. When mowing, don't bag the clippings.
2. Put yard debris and vegetable matter back into the soil.
3. Start a compost pile. The decomposed matter that results is a very nutrient rich substance that can be used as fertilizer.
4. Use chipped yard waste as landscaping mulch.
5. Take waste to a composting facility.
6. Call a landscaper that provides a pick-up service for fall leaves.

Q. What kind of health effects can open burning have?

A. The smoke drifting from a pile of burning debris may seem harmless, yet this is the visible byproduct of a basic chemical reaction. As the waste burns, the chemical compounds present in solid form are transformed into fine particulate and gases which are emitted into the air we breathe. In addition to eye, lung, and nose irritation, the pollution created by open burning poses a serious threat to many that suffer from asthma and other respiratory conditions. The particles emitted can aggravate the respiratory system and cause the symptoms of some allergies and asthma to worsen. Many waste products such as treated lumber, materials with inks or paints, and plastics release toxic chemicals when burned. For more information about the health effects of open burning see the DEQ's Air Quality Division publication “Burning Household Waste- A Source of Air Pollution”

*A portion of the above information is taken from the State of Michigan website.

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