



OPEN FIRES

Open fires are regulated by the laws set forth by Title 17, Section 104 of the Fire Prevention Code and Title 12, Section 108 of the Howard County Code.

Howard County law prohibits non-permitted open fires except recreational, heating, and cooking fires as described below.

The burning of leaves, brush, trash, yard waste, refuse, and building materials is not permitted

Fires – Over 3' to 5' in Diameter

- The fire shall be located at a minimum distance of 50 feet from any structure.
- The fire shall not be more than 5 ft. x 5 ft. in dimension.
- A safe area of at least 10 feet will be maintained around the fire.
- Burning will be done with the consent of the appropriate property owner.
- An appropriate means of extinguishment shall be maintained in close proximity to the fire.
- Fuel for the fire shall consist only of seasoned dry firewood and shall be ignited with a small quantity of paper.
- The fire shall not be used for waste disposal purposes.
- The fire must be constantly attended by a competent adult.
- People shall not be permitted to play in the fire.
- The fire may not be ignited or shall be extinguished
 - If severe winds are prevalent (greater than 10 MPH).
 - If a state or local public official or fire official declares a ban on open fires because of a drought, dry conditions, other atmospheric conditions, or general fire safety.
- Before lighting the fire, call 410-313-2200 (Communications) and notify the on duty supervisor about the fire. Upon completion, the fire shall be extinguished and Communications notified.
- **Grills over 3' used exclusively for cooking are only required to be 15' from any structure. Communications does not have to be notified.**

Fires – Up to 3' in Diameter

- Grills, hibachis, gas-fired grills, chimineas, luminaries, fire pits, or other similar devices used for cooking, heating, or other purposes shall not be used or kindled on a balcony, under an overhanging portion of a building or structure, or within 15 feet of a building or structure.
- Howard County Fire and Rescue may approve electric grills that do not use an alternative fuel for balcony use.
- Manufactured chimineas, luminaries, fire pits, and similar devices shall be equipped with spark arrestors and the fire area shall not exceed 3 ft. in diameter.



Violations of any of the above may result in a citation(s) and/or fine(s)

For more information concerning recreational, heating, or cooking fires contact the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services Office of the Fire Marshal at 410-313-6040. Open fires such as land clearing and agricultural operations may be permitted, for information contact the Bureau of Environmental Health at 410-313-1773.