What you should know about Outdoor Fires

**Know the laws about outdoor fires** – Always check with your local fire department to find out what rules apply in your area before starting any outdoor fire. For more info visit pscleanair.org/outdoorfires

**Don’t get burned**

Violating outdoor burning regulations can be costly. Fines typically start at $2,000 and can exceed $17,000 per day, plus reimbursement costs for fire department responses.

**If smoke from an outdoor fire is bothering you** – Try talking to the people responsible for it, we’ve found they usually aren’t aware their fire is bothering others. If that doesn’t work, contact your local fire department; they may tell you to call 911. Call 911 if the smoke or fire is causing an emergency.

**Residential burning of yard waste**

Burning branches, weeds, grass clippings, etc. is not allowed at any time, in most areas. Check with your local fire district to learn whether burning is allowed in your area, and what restrictions or permit requirements apply. See back for alternatives.

**Land-clearing fires** – Commonly associated with commercial construction operations, these fires are prohibited in King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Under state law, developers are required to use alternatives to burning such as on-site chipping and removal, or off-site wood waste recycling.

**Split, stack, cover, and store firewood** – Burn only dry, seasoned firewood or manufactured logs. Wood should be dried for at least one year.

**What is a “recreational fire”?** – Recreational fires include cooking fires, campfires, and bonfires, as well as fires lit in chimeneas, fire pits, fire bowls, and similar free-standing devices. These fires may be allowed on private property and in designated public locations.

**Burning trash is illegal, everywhere, all the time** – Trash is anything that is not dry, seasoned wood or manufactured logs. Burn barrels are also illegal.

**Fires cannot cause a nuisance to neighbors** – To reduce smoke, burn small, hot fires, and give them lots of air. If smoke from your fire bothers your neighbors or damages their property, you must put it out immediately.

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Outdoor Fires

Know the law before you burn

Smoke from burning leaves and wood may seem harmless, but it’s as dangerous as cigarette smoke. Burning garbage is even worse, and always illegal.

Health Effects of Breathing Smoke

Short-Term Effects
- Irritated eyes, lung, throat, sinuses
- Headaches and allergies
- Trouble breathing
- Asthma attacks

Long-Term Effects
- Chronic lung disease
- Chronic bronchitis
- Emphysema
- Nose, throat, lung, blood and lymph system cancers
- Risk of heart attack and stroke

Consider clean, healthy alternatives to burning yard waste:

Curb It
Sign up with your county solid waste department to have yard waste picked up at the curb, or self-haul to a nearby recycling station.

Solid waste departments may have alternatives to burning in your area:
- King County: (206) 296-4466
- Kitsap County: (360) 337-5777
- Pierce County: (253) 798-2179
- Snohomish County: (425) 388-3425

To report an air quality complaint:
1) Go ONLINE for the quickest response: www.pscleanair.org/complaint
2) CALL our air quality complaint line: 800-552-3565, ext. 6
3) MAIL your complaint to:
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
ATTN: Inspection
1904 Third Avenue - Suite 105
Seattle, WA, 98101

NOTE: Your complaint will become a public record.

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