



Cherokee County

Community Risk Reduction Division

Fire Marshal's Office

Residential Burn Permits

OPEN BURNING ON PRIVATELY OWNED, RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY DURING OPEN BURN SEASON

Homeowners or residents of single-family residential property are authorized to have open fires provided all of the following requirements are met.

1. All burning operations shall comply with the "Rules for Air Quality Control" chapter 391-3-1 as written and amended by the Environmental Protection Division and these standards.
 2. The fire(s) must be on the property occupied by the person receiving the permit and the natural vegetation must be from that property and may not be hauled in from another property.
 3. Only natural vegetation can be destroyed by burning. "Natural vegetation" includes sticks, tree parts six inches and less in diameter, grass, pine straw, hedge trimmings, etc. Burning of poison oak, poison ivy, and any other vegetation which produces severe respiratory damage is not allowed. Burning of cardboard, treated wood, materials containing petroleum products, i.e., tires, plastics, wire insulation, roofing shingles, etc., is not allowed.
 4. No vegetation pile shall be larger than six feet in diameter by two feet in height.
 5. No more than two burning piles are allowed at any one time.
 6. There shall be a minimum of ten feet between piles.
 7. No burning is allowed within 50 feet of a structure.
 8. No burning is allowed within 25 feet of a wooded area, pine island, or other lightweight class A fuel.
 9. No fire shall be within 25 feet of the adjacent property line.
 10. No burning is allowed on windy days (10 mph or higher) or on days when the atmospheric conditions (cloudy, overcast, or raining) would cause the smoke to remain low to the ground.
 11. All open fires shall be constantly attended by a competent person 16 years of age or older to monitor and control such burning. A rake, shovel, or similar hand tool, and charged water hose that will reach to the most remote point of the burn material is to be operation and on site before the fire starts.
 12. Fires may not be started with petroleum-based products.
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3. **Burning of garbage is prohibited.** Garbage is any waste material that includes but is not limited to plastic products, Styrofoam, fiberglass, recycling wire (burned to access metal), tires, clothing, furniture, mattresses, boxes, papers, stumps, root balls, and kudzu vines.
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1. Failure to comply with these rules which results in an uncontrolled fire or a valid complaint by nearby property owner(s) or resident that requires the response of the county fire and emergency services will result in the fire being extinguished immediately.
 2. Fires will be authorized between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and to be completely extinguished one hour before sunset (no smoldering or hot coals remaining).
 3. Even if all guidelines for burning are followed, you may be required to extinguish the fire if it adversely interferes with another's enjoyment of life, use of property, or if someone with a health problem is affected. Fire officials may prohibit burning at times when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make burning hazardous.

Residential burn permits shall be acquired on a daily basis and are subject to weather restrictions. Residential burn permits are issued for hand piled natural vegetation only (see [Residential Burn Permit Guidelines](#)) and cannot include construction debris, tires, plastics, and other man-made material. The issuing of these permits is dependent on the location within the county where you would like to burn.

Please note the following:

- Prior to proceeding with a permit request, please confirm that weather conditions are appropriate for burning by checking the burn permit status web page on the Georgia Forestry Commission site at [Georgia Forestry Commission](#).
- If the residential burn location is located in **Unincorporated Cherokee County** or within the city limits of **Canton, Ball Ground, Holly Springs, Nelson, or Waleska** a burn permit must be obtained via the [Georgia Forestry Commission](#) web site or by calling 877-652-2876 (877ok2burn). Proceed to the permit area and obtain a Burn Authorization Permit.

Woodstock Residents

To obtain a residential burn permit for a location within the city limits of Woodstock, please contact:

- City of Woodstock: [Woodstock Web Site](#)

Types of Fires Allowed All Year

Certain types of fires are allowed all year, even during the burn ban, as listed below.

Recreational Fires

- Recreational fire means an outdoor fire in which only logs or clean wood are being burned and has a total fuel area of 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height for pleasure, religious ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes, and which is not used to dispose of garbage or yard waste.
- Recreational fires are allowed between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 p.m.
- No recreational burning is allowed on windy days (10 mph or higher) or on days when the atmospheric conditions (cloudy, overcast, or raining) would cause the smoke to remain low to the ground.
- Recreational fires must be attended by an adult who must be watching the fire at all times. Never leave the fire unattended.
- A water hose or fire extinguisher must be on hand that can reach the fire, and can be ready to use if needed.
- Recreational fires must be at least 25 feet from all structures.
- Recreational fires shall not be started with petroleum-based products.

Bonfires

- An outdoor fire larger than a recreational fire in which only logs or clean wood are being burned for ceremonial purposes.
- A bonfire permit is required to be issued by the Cherokee County Fire Marshal's Office. Please call 678-493-6290 to request an inspection and obtain a bonfire permit at least 5-7 business days prior to the desired date.
- Bonfires must be 50' from structures, 100' from property lines, and completely out by 10:30 p.m.

Agriculture Burns

- An Agriculture Burn permit must be obtained through the Georgia Forestry Commission. This must be obtained on a daily by contacting the [Georgia Forestry Commission web contact page](#).
- The definition of an Agriculture Burn: Burning in the open of vegetative materials from the production and harvesting of crops and animals for the purpose of marketing for profit, or providing a livelihood. This practice is generally used to reduce crop residue, stimulate yield, control diseases, reduce unwanted plant species, or otherwise maintain the productivity of agricultural lands.
- There is not to be any cleared, piled or stacked wood, logs or branches. The land is not to be cleared by any machinery or equipment.
- EPD's GA Open Burning Rules for GA currently state agricultural burns are "Carrying out recognized agricultural procedures necessary for production or harvesting of crops".
- "Recognized agricultural procedures" as defined by state law are the burning of "improved pastures and residue on cultivated crop lands.

Types of Fires Exempt from Burn Regulations

- Fires burned for the purpose of cooking food for immediate human consumption, e.g., barbecue grill or pit.
- Fires in an outdoor fireplace, chimenea, fire bowl, or other similar device burning logs or clean wood **only**.