



Fact Sheet

Residential Open Burning

Butte County Air Quality
Management District
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www.bcaqmd.org

What is Residential Open Burning?

Residential open burning (also referred to as “Dooryard Burning”) is the open burning of vegetative waste on residential lots that are less than one (1) acre in size. Residential open burning is regulated by the local, State and federal fire protection agencies and the Butte Air Quality Management District (District).

District Rules do not require air quality burn permits for residential open burning. However, fire protection agencies (Cal-Fire) require burn permits during certain times of the year (typically May and June). The “Burn Ban”, which is declared by Cal-Fire, prohibits burning, typically from July 1 through October 31 of each year. Please contact your local fire station or the main office at (530) 538-7111 with any questions. Burning within incorporated areas of a city or town is also subject to the city/town fire department open burning requirements.

Burning conducted at multi-unit dwellings, by commercial entities, and on lots equal to or greater than one (1) acre, when done for the purpose of compliance with local fire hazard reduction ordinances, is classified as Fire Hazard Reduction Burning. Information regarding Fire Hazard Reduction open burning rules is provided on a separate District Fact Sheet entitled “Fire Hazard Reduction Burning” and on our website at www.bcaqmd.org.

Why does the District have Residential Open Burning Rules?

Butte County does not meet the State or federal health based standards for ozone or fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). In order to work toward attaining compliance with the health based standards, the District has adopted rules regarding open burning. The District is also required by State law to have performance standards for residential open burning.

What Are The Residential Open Burning Rules?

Effective March 1, 2011, you must follow all of the requirements below:

- Residential open burning may only be conducted on a permissive residential burn day. Residential burn day status is updated daily by 8:45 a.m. When meteorological conditions are favorable for burning, the District also provides a burn day forecast for the following day by 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please call **530-332-9407** or toll free at **1-855-332-9407** for information on the burn day status. Burn day status is also posted on the District’s website, www.bcaqmd.org. You must confirm that it is a permissive burn day before burning.
- Burn hours are from 8:45 a.m. to one hour before sunset. No material may be added to the fire after 3:00 p.m. When fire protection agency burn permits are in effect (typically May-June), burn hours are as stated on your burn permit. Contact your local fire protection agency with any questions regarding their rules.
- Only clean, dry vegetation may be burned on the property on which it was grown.
- Vegetative waste greater than six (6) inches in diameter must be allowed to dry for a minimum of thirty (30) days after cutting or pruning; vegetative waste less than or equal to six (6) inches in diameter must be allowed to dry a minimum of fifteen (15) days.
- In order to minimize smoke production, all vegetative waste must be dry and reasonably free of dirt, soil, visible surface moisture and shall be arranged in a manner to allow air to circulate freely.

- Burning should not be conducted when wind may carry smoke into a nearby populated area and create a public nuisance.
- All open fires shall be located more than twenty-five (25) feet from the nearest occupied dwelling on any adjacent parcel.
- The burning of poison oak is prohibited.
- It is illegal to use a burn barrel, or to burn paper or cardboard, unless the burning occurs in specified “exempt” areas of eastern Butte County. Please contact the District for more information on exempt areas.
- Burning should not be conducted when specific weather conditions (particularly wind) are such that the burning may not be considered safe.
- The pile size may not exceed four (4) feet in diameter. All areas within ten (10) feet of the pile must be free and clear of all vegetation and flammable material.
- A responsible adult must be in attendance of the fire at all times until the fire is dead out.
- You must have enough water available to extinguish the fire if needed.

Special Conditions Regarding Residential Open Burning within the Town of Paradise

In addition to adherence to District Residential Open Burning Requirements, open burning within the Town of Paradise is only allowed with a valid burn permit, issued by the Paradise Fire Department. The permit is valid only during the months of March through May, when burning is only allowed east of Clark Road from the 1st through the 15th of each month, and west of Clark Road from the 16th through the last day of the month. Burning is allowed on both sides of Clark Road during a special burn period, typically mid November through mid December of each year. Burn hours during permissive burn periods are from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please contact Paradise Fire with any questions at 530-872-6206.

Special Conditions Regarding Residential Open Burning in the Magalia/Upper Ridge Area

During the months of January through June, residential open burning shall only be conducted in areas north of Wycliff Way/Perry Road from the 1st through the 15th of each month, and south of Wycliff Way/Perry Road from the 16th through the last day of the month. Burning is only allowed on a permissive burn day.

Special Conditions Regarding Residential Open Burning within the City Limits of Chico

Residential burning within the City Limits is illegal at all times during the year by city ordinance.

Special Conditions Regarding Residential Open Burning Within the Chico Sphere of Influence

Residential open burning is prohibited on lots less than 0.90 acres in size in the unincorporated areas of Butte County which are within the Chico Sphere of Influence.

Where Can I Get More Information?

More information regarding the District’s Open Burning Regulations and other programs may be obtained at our website: www.bcaqmd.org or by calling the District office at 530-332-9400 or toll free at 1-855-332-9400.