



Fact Sheet

Burn Permit Requirements

Butte County Air Quality
Management District
629 Entler Avenue, Suite 15
Chico, CA 95928
530.332-9400 or 855.332-9400
www.bcaqmd.org

When is an Air Quality Burn Permit required by the Butte County AQMD?

- **No Permit Required:** The Butte County AQMD (District) does **not** issue burn permits for residential burning, including burning of piles on lots one acre or greater in size when the burning is being conducted by the owner/occupants of that property. CAL-FIRE and local fire agencies have their own requirements.
- **Permits Required:**
 - **Prescribed burning**, including broadcast and/or underburning on residential property. If the burn to be conducted is expected to involve more than 10 acres of land area per burn day, a Smoke Management Plan will be required, which is described below. Prescribed burning performed by "land managers" falls under "Agricultural burning" below.
 - **Burning on private property by contractors**, including the open burning of brush from a lot from which hazard trees have been removed or a lot that has been logged or otherwise cleared in part or whole.
 - **Agricultural burning**, which is defined as the open burning of vegetative materials produced from the commercial growing and harvesting of crops or raising of animals. This includes orchards, field crop burning and prescribed burning of both piles and broadcast/underburns performed by land managers or foresters/logging companies.

The submittal of a Smoke Management Plan (SMP) is required as an addendum to the burn permit, for any prescribed burn, regardless of size which:

- Will occur below a mean sea level (MSL) elevation of 1000 feet;
- Encompasses a land area greater than ten (10) acres; or,
- Is estimated to produce more than one (1) ton of particulate matter and which occurs at or above an MSL elevation of 1000 feet.

A \$140 fee applies for burn permits requiring a SMP. Information regarding these additional requirements is located at <https://bcaqmd.org/burning/prescribed-burning/> or contact Ursula Parker at (530) 332-9400 x 104 or email, uparker@bcaqmd.org.

All open burning is subject to the following requirements:

- Burning is only allowed on a burn day. Call 332-9407 (residential) or 332-9406 (agricultural) or the District office at (530) 332-9400 or go to our website, www.bcaqmd.org for burn day info.
- Burn hours are 8:45 a.m. to one hour before sunset, or local fire agency requirements apply.
- Vegetative waste may only be burned on the property where it was grown.
- You are responsible for any smoke, odors, or nuisance from open burning on your property and any damage caused by your fire.
- Vegetative waste must be allowed to dry a minimum of 15 days after cutting or pruning before burning, 30 days if the material is 6" or greater in diameter.
- You may burn only clean and dry natural vegetation that was grown on the property where it is being burned.
- The use of burn barrels for burning for disposal on residential property is prohibited.
- The following additional requirements apply to residential burning on less than one acre:
 - The maximum pile size allowed is 4 feet in diameter. A ten (10)-foot clearance around the burn pile and a 25-foot distance from the pile to the nearest neighbor's occupied structure is required.
 - A responsible person must be in attendance and water must be available to put out the fire if needed.
 - Do not burn if weather conditions make it unsafe.
 - The burning of poison oak is prohibited.

Butte County Air Quality Management District Open Burning Requirements, Effective November 1, 2021

Open Burning Category ¹	Burning Allowed?	Method ²	Rule 300 Section #	District permit Required?	Rule 300 Section #
1. Agricultural Burning including Flood Debris: Agricultural operations in growing of crops or raising of fowl or animals (as a means of gainful occupation) Burning of processed ag waste (e.g., hulls) is not allowed	Yes	Piles or open field crop waste	4.1, 5.1, 6, 7, 8 and 9	Yes	7
2. Agricultural Burning – Rice Straw Burning Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 41865 and Sacramento Valley Smoke Management Plan	Yes	Open field crop waste	4.1, 5.1, 6, 7, 8 and 9, specifically 9.11	Yes	7
3. Agricultural Burning – Wildland Vegetation Management/ Forest Management Burning Range improvement, forest management, or wildland vegetation management burn meeting specific criteria	Yes	Piles, broadcast or underburn	4.1, 5.1, 6, 7, 8 and 9, specifically 9.12	Yes	7
4. Non-Agricultural Burning - Fire Hazard Reduction Burning Pile burning for compliance with county or local fire ordinances: a. Multi-unit dwellings; b. By Commercial Entities; or c. On residential lots equal to or greater than one acre.	Yes	Piles	4.7, 4.10, 5.21, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.8	No	7.4
5. Non-Agricultural Burning –Prescribed Burning Prescribed (Broadcast or Underburn) Burning conducted on residential lots equal to or greater than one acre.	Yes	Broadcast or underburn	4.7, 4.10, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.8	Yes	7.4
6. Non-Agricultural Burning – Fires Set by Public Officer	Yes	Any approved method	4.8, 4.10, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3	No	7.4
7. Non-Agricultural Burning – Disposal of Contraband	Yes	Any approved method	4.4, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.4	No, but must provide notice of ignition	7.4 and 10.4
8. Non-Agricultural Burning – Industrial Site Fire Training	Yes	Any approved method	4.9, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.5	No	7
9. Non-Agricultural Burning – Land Clearing Any size parcel for purposes of real estate development	Yes	Piles	4.10, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.6	Yes	7, 10.6
10. Non-Agricultural Burning – Right of Way, Levee, Reservoir and Ditch Clearing Conducted by a public entity or utility	Yes	Piles or broadcast burn	4.14, 6, 8, 10.1, 10.2 and 10.7	Yes	7, 10.7
11. Residential Burning Single and two-family dwellings on lots less than one acre.	Yes	Piles, 4 feet diameter max	4.13, 5.41, 6, 8 and 11	No	7.4
12. Cooking Fire or Recreational Fire	Yes	Piles	6 and 7.4.1	No	7.4.1

Notes: 1. Open Burning Categories as defined by District Rule 300, Recodified and Amended December 9, 2010.

2. Method indicates the usual means of accomplishing the burn, usually as required by local fire agency. Additional performance standards may apply.