



**County of Goochland**  
**Department of Fire-Rescue**  
**Office of the Fire Marshal**  
**Open Burning Regulations**

*The following information is provided as a summary of the open burning regulations for Goochland County.  
If you have any questions regarding open burning, please contact the Office of the Fire Marshal at (804) 556-5365.*

**A. For ALL opening burning:**

1. Prior to all open burning, the County Sheriff's Office must be notified at **(804) 556-5348** with the location and times of the burning.
2. Open burning conducted with a permit or in accordance with regulations does not exempt any person from being held accountable for damages or injuries as a result of the burning. All persons responsible for the open burning are required to follow all applicable codes and ordinances. Cost for any emergency response required due to a failure to maintain control of the open burning may be charged to the responsible party.
3. From February 15<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, the State Forestry laws supersede local ordinances.
4. All open burning will be constantly attended until the fire is completely extinguished.
5. Burning must be conducted as far away as possible from roadways to prevent smoke from affecting a driver's safety.
6. Burning will be conducted when winds will not carry smoke and ash to another person's dwelling, building, or roadways.
7. Any open burning that causes objectionable smoke or odor will require extinguishment until more favorable winds are present. Multiple complaints for the same location may result in revocation of a permit.
8. Burning of the following is **strictly prohibited**:
  - a. Hazardous or toxic materials and their containers.
  - b. Rubber tires, rubber products, asphalt, petroleum products, treated lumber.
  - c. Industrial or commercial waste.
  - d. Animal carcasses or animal waste.
  - e. Garbage, including rotting animal or vegetable matter.
  - f. Demolition materials such as building materials or parts of buildings being torn down.
  - g. Materials transported from another location or property.
9. Applications will be processed within 10 days of receipt of the application and permit fee.
10. No Accelerants may be used to ignite any fire.

**B. Private homeowners, landowners, or their tenants may burn on their property if the following conditions are met:**

1. The location of the materials to be burned must be at least 300 feet from the nearest building on another person's property and at least 50 feet from any building on the property on which the fire is located. Written (dated) permission from neighbors must be obtained prior to burning if the materials are within 300 feet of their building(s).
2. The pile size is limited to 8' by 8'. If the material to be burned exceeds the 8'x8' maximum size, a permit is required. Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent the fire from spreading. This can be done by plowing or grubbing the soil around the pile and providing an ample water supply.
3. Materials which may be burned include: leaves, limbs, yard rakings, garden trimmings, brush and other plant materials, household refuse, and trash accumulated during day-to-day living.
4. Items burned in an approved container (55 gal drum) may be burned no closer than 15' to a building on your own property.

**C. Burning conducted by contractors, property owners, homeowners, or tenants:**

1. A permit is required for burning conducted by any person(s) involving piles exceeding 8'x8'.
2. Applicants for open burning must provide permit and/or approved POD numbers prior to the issuance of a burn permit for land clearing or new construction sites.
3. Permits are available at the Goochland Fire-Rescue Administration Office during normal business hours (8:30am-5pm).
  - a. Applications must be accompanied by a \$75 fee. Checks, money orders, or the exact cash amount are accepted.
  - b. Applications must be accompanied by a site diagram clearly showing the location of the burn pile(s) and distances to roadways and the nearest buildings on another person's property. The Fire Marshal must approve all site plans and may require a site visit prior to issuing a permit.
  - c. Open burning for land clearing debris, the minimum distance from any building on another person's property for open burning is 750 feet. Written (dated) permission must be obtained from the property owner and maintained on-site for the duration of the permit and a copy attached to the application for any burning conducted closer than 750 feet to a building.
  - d. Open burning permits can be issued for a period not to exceed 1-year, if the Fire Marshal issues a permit for less than 1-year then one extension can be approved at no additional charge as long as it is within the 1-year time period. Any requests for an extension must be requested from the Fire Marshal prior to the expiration of the permit.

***Violations of the open burning regulations are punishable as Class 1 misdemeanors.***