



Township of Wilmot Fire Department

Guidelines For Contained Site Fires

"The information in this brochure is intended to assist persons with "Contained Site" burn Permits to conduct burning in a safe and responsible way.

Permits are not transferable from person to person, so if you have moved into a home with a contained site fire pit on your property, you are required to obtain a new permit.

Fire is one of nature's most fascinating things. It is at the same time our friend, and potentially our most dangerous foe.

It can be used to produce electricity, heat our homes, and cook our food. It is used in producing steel to make vehicles, the buildings we live and work in, and is a part of the natural rejuvenation of our forests.

Uncontrolled, it can destroy our lives in seconds, consuming almost everything in its path.

Smoke from fire can poison our environment, or us and can be at the least annoying or troublesome for those with allergies, or other health problems.

For this reason we ask that you refrain from having fires on days when there is an air quality advisory in effect.

It is also important that you be especially aware of the direction of travel of any smoke from your fire. Be prepared to put the fire out immediately if the wind direction carries smoke towards a neighbour's house. They may not have air conditioning and need to have windows open for their comfort. They may wish to sit on their patio or deck, and your fire should not prevent a neighbour from enjoying his own back yard.

Consider the recent weather conditions before starting a fire. If it has not rained recently, be aware that even a small spark from your fire could ignite dry grass or other material and that embers can travel some distance, even on a small breeze.

Please use the following information to assist you to burn responsibly.

Do

Burn clean dry wood. Hardwood is recommended. Softwood and especially old skid wood usually produces more smoke and sparks.

Do

Keep enough water available to quickly extinguish a fire if necessary. A garden hose, or several 5 gallon pails should be kept close by so that you can extinguish the fire if there is a change in the wind direction or speed that could send embers flying or send smoke towards your home or that of a neighbour.

Do

Build your fire in a way that encourages a hot fire. Hot fires produce less smoke. Make sure the fire pit or tire rim allows for enough airflow to the base of the fire to aid the combustion process. Holes drilled around a tire rim will help the flow of air.

Do

Clean out your contained site before starting each fire. Left over, partially burned wood and ashes will pick up moisture from the air, or from rain, and will cause more smoke to be generated.

Do

Build your fire the old fashioned or "Boy Scout" way. First build a small "teepee" or "log cabin" with small sticks with pieces of newspaper stuffed inside. Then light the newspaper and once your fire is going well start adding larger pieces of wood.

Do

Extinguish your fire completely when you are finished so that there are no coals or embers smoldering unattended. They produce a lot of smoke when the fire is dying out, and any increase in wind could fan the fire causing sparks and embers to ignite nearby combustible materials.

Don't

Burn grass, leaves or other refuse

Don't

Burn plastics, painted or pressure treated wood, including plywood. Smoke and gasses produced by these products can be extremely toxic.

Don't

Burn cardboard, paper or other items that can be recycled.

Don't

Leave a fire unattended. Burning with a permit is allowed, but only if the fire is attended at all times.

Don't

Leave matches or lighters used to start your fire laying where children can have access to them.

Don't

Burn without a permit.

Don't

Build large fires. The intent of the by-law is to permit small-contained fires. You should be able to get close enough to roast marshmallows or wieners. Control of large fires is difficult.

The Township of Wilmot currently allows for approved contained site fires, however, permit holders, or those who are considering obtaining one, need to be aware that the Ministry of the Environment is ultimately responsible for and enforces Provincial Legislation with respect to any environmental issues. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure that burning is conducted in a manner that doesn't conflict with any Federal or Provincial Government law.

Permit fees are non refundable. Should changes occur to any Federal or Provincial regulations that would prohibit burning, all permits would be considered invalid.