

HALIFAX FIRE DEPARTMENT SOG 26	OPEN AIR BURNING
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26.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide the Fire Department official with guidance in the regulating of the use and safety of chimineas, burning pits, and all fire pits that are built or purchased. It shall in no way be a supplement to the extension of the existing open burning season authorized by this office and the State Fire Marshalls Office.

26.1 DEFINITION

Above Ground Fire Pit – A fire pit of noncombustible material such as steel, brick, or masonry.

Below Ground Burning Pit – A belowground fire pits at least four inches in depth and shall be surrounded on the outside, above ground, by a noncombustible material such as steel, brick, or masonry.

Chimineas - A portable fire pit of noncombustible material such as steel, brick, or masonry that has a chimney.

Cook Fire – A fire in a fire pit whether above or below ground, fixed or portable, that is no bigger than 3 feet wide and a flame height no taller than 2 feet. Used for cooking only. All cook fires have to be out by 2200 hours.

Portable Fire Pits – An above ground and portable pit constructed of steel, brick, or masonry. This pit must be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications and these regulations.

26.2 SCOPE

Residents and property owners 18 years and older may have a small cook fire on their private property without a permit from the fire department. However, the burning of brush, slash, construction debris, grass, and leaves is strictly prohibited outside of the burning season.

26.3 BURNING REQUIREMENTS

Chimineas, burning pits, and fire pits commercially purchased may be used within the Town of Halifax limits provided they are used properly. Flames in pits shall not exceed 3 feet in width and 2 feet in height. Spark arrestors are required and should be used anytime a fire pit is used. Precautions should be taken in areas bordering tall grass and brush. A fire extinguisher or water should be located near the fire in the event of an accident.

Any fires should not be left unattended whether it is produced by a grill, chimney, or fire pit. All fires should be completely extinguished when done being used.

Combustible vegetation, waste, and storage should be kept at a minimum around structures that border wild land areas.

Only natural firewood or commercial logs may be burned. Burning of lumber, trash, pallets, scrap wood, tree trimmings, leaves, yard waste, paper, cardboard, garbage and similar items is not permitted.

The fuel load capacity of the container cannot exceed three feet in diameter or two feet in height.

The container shall not be located less than 15 feet away from any structures or combustible materials. The fire must be constantly attended and supervised until the fire has been completely extinguished.

A portable fire extinguisher or other approved extinguishing equipment, such as a garden hose, sand, or dirt, must be readily available.

26.4 NUISANCE SMOKE

Department members shall respond to calls of smoke in the area or outside fire in accordance with existing standard procedures.

DEP regulations and the Town of Halifax By-Laws both have strict requirements on smoke that becomes a nuisance to others.

Open burning that will be offensive or objectionable “nuisance smoke” because of smoke or odor emissions when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous shall be prohibited. The fire officer or representative is authorized to order the extinguishment of any open burning that creates or adds to a hazardous or objectionable situation.