



FIRE DEPARTMENT

Open Burn Policy

The hazards associated with open burning and recreational fires require the Fire Department to develop an enforcement policy that enables the hazards to be properly managed. To properly manage the hazards a clear understanding of the differences in the types of fires is essential.

Section 307 of the 2015 International Fire Code (IFC) addresses four (4) types of fires:

1. Bonfires
2. Open burning fires
3. Recreational fires
4. Portable outdoor fireplaces

Each type of fire is defined separately and subsequently each has differing requirements. This policy establishes the enforcement procedures utilized by the City of Lafayette in addressing these types of fires.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **BONFIRE:** An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes.
2. **OPEN BURNING FIRE:**
 - a. The burning of materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber.
 - b. Open burning does not include road flares, smudge pots, and similar devices associated with safety or occupational uses typically considered open flames or recreational fires.
 - c. For purposes of this definition, a chamber shall be regarded as enclosed when, during the time combustion occurs, only apertures, ducts, stacks, flues or chimneys necessary to provide combustion air and permit the escape of exhaust gas are open.
3. **RECREATIONAL FIRE:** An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, barbeque grill, or barbeque pit and has a total fuel area of 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes.
 - a. Note: Fires not complying with this definition are regulated as open burning fires or bonfires.
4. **RUBBISH (TRASH):** Combustible and non-combustible waste materials,

including residue from the burning of coal, wood, coke or other combustible material, paper, rags, cartons, tin cans, metals, mineral matter, glass crockery, dust and discarded refrigerators, and heating, cooking or incinerator type appliances. (IFC Section 202).

5. **PORTABLE OUTDOOR FIREPLACE.** A portable, outdoor, solid-fuel-burning fireplace that may be constructed of steel, concrete, clay or other noncombustible material. A portable outdoor fireplace may be open in design, or may be equipped with a small hearth opening and a short chimney or chimney opening in the top.
6. **STRUCTURE:** That which is built or constructed. (IBC Section 202):

PERMITS:

Permits shall be required for the following:

1. Bonfires.
2. Open burning fires:
 - a. Open burning permits shall be limited to operations for silvicultural or the practice of caring for forests with respect to human objectives, agricultural crop and plant preparation and irrigation ditch control of weeds and brush.
 - b. Permits shall not be issued for burning of brush, tree trimmings, grass, trash or other debris.
 - c. Permits shall not be issued for the burning of lumber, wood products, or similar materials for the preparation of cooking or roasting pits.
 - d. Open burning shall not be conducted within 50 feet of any structure and all necessary provisions shall be taken to prevent fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure.

The following do NOT require permits:

3. Recreational fires:
 - a. Fires contained in an approved cooking or burning appliances shall not require a permit. The Fire Department shall have the authority to determine if cooking or burning appliances meet acceptable criteria to be classified as approved.
 - b. All recreational fires shall meet the requirements of the City of Lafayette Fire Code and the requirements in Section 307.4.2 listed below.
 - c. Recreational fires shall not be conducted with 25 feet of a structure or combustible material.
 - d. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.
 - e. Barbeque grills on combustible decks shall comply with Section 308.1.4.
4. Portable outdoor fireplaces shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall not be operated within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material. Exception: Portable outdoor fireplaces used at 1 and 2 family dwellings.

SUPERVISION:

Any authorized and permitted burning shall be constantly attended by a designated person(s) approved by the Fire Department. The fire shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one fire extinguisher rated at least 4-A or other approved on-site fire-extinguishing equipment shall be available for immediate utilization.

307.1.1 Prohibited open burning. Open burning shall be prohibited when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous.

307.2.1 Authorization. Where required by state or local law or regulations, *open burning* shall only be permitted with prior approval from the state or local air and water quality management authority, provided that all conditions specified in the authorization are followed.

307.3 Extinguishment authority. Where open burning creates or adds to a hazardous situation, or a required permit for open burning has not been obtained, the *fire code official* is authorized to order the extinguishment of the open burning operation.