



ANDOVER FIRE RESCUE

32 North Main Street
Andover, Ma 01810

Michael B. Mansfield, Fire Chief

OPEN BURNING

Why are there limits on open burning in Massachusetts?

The Department of Environmental Protection (Mass. DEP) and the Andover Fire department limit open burning for public health and safety reasons. Open burning pollutes the air and can make it difficult for people with respiratory problems to breathe. When the air is stagnant, open burning can pose smoke and odor nuisances and health risks to nearby residents, particularly in densely populated areas. Open burning can also pose a safety risk when it is not adequately controlled. The limits on open burning do not apply to outdoor cooking.

What can be burned, when, and under what conditions?

You may burn, with limits: brush, cane, driftwood, forestry debris, tree prunings, dead raspberry stalks, blueberry patches and infected beehives. You may not legally burn grass, hay, leaves, stumps or tires. You are allowed to burn brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris - not including grass, hay, leaves or stumps - between **January 15 and April 30**, so long as the open burning takes place:

- With the permission of the Andover Fire Department
- Between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- When the air is circulating well but winds are light
- No less than 75 feet away from all dwellings
- On your own property and as close as possible to the source of material(s) to be burned.

Be sure to get a permit from the Andover Fire Department **before** burning anything. Fungus-infected Elmwood and other materials normally associated with agriculture and agricultural land clearing - such as tree prunings, dead raspberry stalks, blueberry patches for pruning purposes - and disease-infected beehives may also be burned with fire department permission.

What other types of outdoors fires are allowed?

Outdoor cooking is allowed year-round in all communities and is not subject to open burning limits. With specific approval from Mass. DEP, local fire departments may also stage outdoor fires for purposes of fire prevention or protection research and training.

What types of open burning are not allowed?

There are **no circumstances** under which it is legal to burn grass, hay, leaves, stumps or tires. They simply do not burn as "cleanly" as those materials that may legally be burned. All of them produce acrid smoke that causes nuisance conditions and threatens people's health. When tires are burned, they produce noxious gases and petroleum residue, both of which can be harmful to people and the environment. In addition, the burning of brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris from commercial or industrial land clearing is prohibited statewide.

Are there any communities in which open burning is not allowed at all?

Yes. Open burning is prohibited in 22 of the state's largest cities and towns due to the density of population and close proximity of buildings within their borders: Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Chicopee, Everett, Fall River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Malden, Medford, New Bedford, Newton, Somerville, Springfield, Waltham, Watertown, West Springfield and Worcester.

OPEN BURNING GUIDELINES

First things first:

- Obtain a permit to burn at the Andover Fire Department at 32 North Main Street.
- Contact **Andover Fire Rescue @ 978-475-1281 Extension 2012** to obtain permission to burn each day. Please have your permit number, address and phone number available when calling.

Starting the fire:

- Remove all grass from the area where you will be burning.
- Try to start the fire with natural "kindling" - never with gasoline or charcoal lighter fluid. If you must use an artificial helper, kerosene is probably safest.

While burning:

- Never add brush that is green or wet. It will reduce the efficiency of the fire and produce thick smoke.
- Someone must attend the fire until it's completely out. You will need a hose or other supply of water and a shovel or rake for controlling the fire.

Putting the fire out:

- Burn the fire down to the coals, drown them with water, spread them out, and then drown them again.