

FAQs: Opening Burning in Grand County

From Grand County DNR and the Grand County Wildfire Council

Q: What is slash pile/open burning?

A: Any time you light a fire outdoors, you are *open burning*. Slash pile burning is effective and efficient for private landowners to dispose of tree slash or other vegetative material.

Q: Who regulates open burning in Grand County?

A: Since 2001, Grand County Natural Resources (GCNR) operates under authority from Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Go to: co.grand.co.us/142/Open-Burning.

Q: Why are permits needed?

A: Open burning pollutes the air and poses a fire hazard; the State and County regulate it to protect public health and the environment in our beautiful state. This pollution can cause serious short and long-term health problems, obscure visibility, and create odors impacting not only you but the health of your neighbors. Burning produces many harmful chemicals like carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, formaldehyde, dioxins (a known carcinogen) and others that can irritate the eyes, nose and lungs.

Q: When is burn season?

A: It opens after 3-6" of season-long snow has accumulated (usually sometime in November) and stays open while there is enough snow on the ground (usually through March).

Q: What is a burn day?

A: Any day of the week with favorable conditions for smoke dispersal. GCNR makes a daily determination based on forecasts from the National Weather Service. Burning on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day is not allowed.

Q: When do I need a permit?

A: If you are burning piles GREATER than 3' x 3' and 2' in height. You do not need a permit for cooking or "recreational" sized fires less than 3' x 3' and 2' in height. Agricultural burns, defined as "the burning of cover vegetation for the purpose of preparing the soil for crop production, weed control, or maintenance of water conveyance structures related to agricultural operations" do not require a permit. Open burning of household trash, wood or yard debris on agricultural land is NOT agricultural burning!

Q: Where do I get a permit?

Burn permits are available from the GCNR beginning in mid-October: online at co.grand.co.us/142/Open-Burning. Office hours are Monday through Friday 7am to 3:30pm, starting November 4. The permits are also in a box outside the office at 469 East Topaz in Granby. You may email, mail, fax or drop off your completed application any time; this information is on the permit.

Q: How much does a burn permit cost?

A: Private Property permits/Standard permits are \$20 per property. A Commercial permit is for an entity/person collecting slash from other properties and burning it elsewhere OR a property that exceeds 900,000 cubic feet of material in aggregate; and these are \$100.

Q: What happens after I submit my application?

A: GCNR personnel will inspect your piles and notify you once approved, sending you a copy of a signed and numbered permit. Once issued a burn permit, you must call **970-887-0745** on each of your desired burn day(s) to see if atmospheric conditions will allow a burn day. Remember, there should be SNOW on the GROUND where you are burning.

Q: What CAN I burn?

A: Slash piles and other vegetation debris, **stumps are not allowed**. If you live within the limits of any of the towns (excluding Parshall or Tabernash) or an HOA, check with your town hall and covenants to determine if burning is allowed.

Q: What CAN'T I burn?

A: Stumps, material that contains food wastes, plastic, coated or treated wood products, rubber, insulation, tires, car bodies, insulated wire, motor oil, aerosol cans, hazardous or toxic materials, or other materials that will produce substantial amounts of smoke and particulates are prohibited. Sawdust, slabs, chips, shavings, mill trim, or other wood products derived from wood processing, construction debris or buildings/structures for demolition purposes are also **NOT ALLOWED**.

Q: Does slash pile size matter?

A: To take advantage of the typical 6-hour burn windows in our area, GCNR recommends that piles be 10 to 15' in diameter and at least 8' high. Teepee shapes work well for shedding snow and burning well/clean. Larger piles are allowed, but winter air quality conditions will limit how many days you have available to burn larger piles.

Q: Why can't I burn in a burn barrel?

A: Because it is against the law! Burn barrels are defined as incinerators by the Sates Air Quality Control Commission's Common Provisions Regulation. They do not combust efficiently due to lower air flow and temperatures, thereby creating more particulate matter and toxins.

Q: What if I suspect someone is burning illegally?

A: Call the Grand County dispatch non-emergency number at 970-725-3311 to report smoke or an illegal open burn. The Daily Burn List on the GCNR webpage lists all of the approved and permitted open burners in the County each day, and will also state if it is NOT a burn day.

We wish you safe and happy burning this winter!