

# Open Burning

## Quick Reference Guide



### Terminology

- **Open Burning:** The ignition, setting or burning of any material directly in the open air including slash, land-clearing or debris burning fires. Open burning does not include a Recreational Fire.
- **Open Burning Season:** Is established from March 1 through November 30 of each year as the time when Open Burning can take place. No Permits will be issued for dates outside of Open Burning Season.
- **Permit:** Is a document issued by the County or any rural fire district or fire service area through its Fire Chief which provides permission to ignite or set a fire pursuant to these regulations. A Permit does not allot the ignition, setting or burning of materials prohibited by state or federal law.
- **Permit Holder:** Means the person, firm or corporate entity to whom a Permit is issued or the individual person acting as its agency or designee.
- **Recreational Fire:** Means a fire ignited, set or burning in a nonflammable structure measuring less than 48 inches and for which a reasonably prudent and suitable source of extinguishing the fire is available.

### Initiation Process

- Anyone conducting Open Burning must purchase a permit each Open Burning Season. The Permit is good everywhere in Gallatin County and can be utilized at multiple locations.
- Permits must be activated each day prior to conducting Open Burning.
- Permits can be activated online at [burnpermits.mt.gov](http://burnpermits.mt.gov) or by phone at 877-306-2876.
- Details on Open Burning status and regulations are available at [burnpermits.readygallatin.com](http://burnpermits.readygallatin.com).

### Considerations

- While fire officials try to monitor weather conditions, the Permit Holder is ultimately responsible for ensuring it is safe to conduct Open Burning and controlling the fire at all times until it is completely extinguished.
- Burn Permits are intended to aid Permit Holders in determining when conditions are known to not be safe for Open Burning. Additionally, it helps prevent fire departments from needlessly responding to known Open Burning.
- Burn barrels by themselves are legal, however the materials most people burn in them are not. It is illegal to burn food waste, plastics, treated lumber, demolished structures, petroleum products, animal waste, etc...
- Burn Permits are not needed for recreational fires.
- Burn Permits can be purchased in person at the Bozeman Fire Department, Central Valley Fire District, Gallatin County Treasurers Office, Three Forks Library & Manhattan Fire Department.
- It is possible to burn outside of the Open Burning Season, but not under the county's Open Burning authority. It is possible to obtain a permit from Montana DEQ to burn outside of Open Burning Season. Individuals conducting active timber operations can also burn outside of the Open Burning Season through their Hazard Reduction Agreement with Montana DNRC.

### Legal References

- [Gallatin County Fire Permit and Control Regulations, Ordinance 2014-004](#)
- [Bozeman Open Burning Ordinance, Section 18, Article 4](#)
- [Three Forks Open Burning Regulations, Title 5, Chapter 3](#)
- [West Yellowstone Burning Permits, Chapter 8, Section 4](#)
- [Belgrade Open Burning Regulations, Title 6, Chapter 3](#)