



Public Information Regarding Open Burning

The Ordinance Itself -

City Code - Title IX - Police Regulations - Chapter 151, Article 4, Section 9.34

(7) *Open Burning.* Open burning shall be prohibited.

- (a) The following exemptions shall be allowed provided they do not violate any other Sections of this Chapter.
 - (i) The burning of wood, charcoal, coke or other accepted fuels for the preparing of food in an approved container or utensil while being used in a safe and sanitary manner.
 - (ii) The use of approved gaseous or liquid fired salamanders commonly employed in conjunction with building and construction operations when being used in accordance with accepted safety standards.
 - (iii) Roofers, tanners, plumbers, or others pursuing a business requiring the use of fire or for the purpose of boiling tar, pitch or oil used in the regular course of an appropriate business or trade, and while being used in a safe and sanitary manner.
 - (iv) Open burning for Fire Department and/or Civil Defense purposes shall be permitted only under the following conditions:
 - a. The area is adequately protected by Fire Department personnel.
 - b. The fire will be of short duration.
 - c. The ambient air, at time of burning is relatively free of pollutants.
 - d. The Fire Department Chief submits to the Director written authorization for such burning.
- (b) Smoking, smoldering incinerators or any burning of garbage or refuse that smolders or gives off nauseous odors is prohibited.

General Guidelines

Cooking:

For the purpose of this ordinance, the mere presence of nearby food **DOES NOT** qualify as an exemption. For the food preparation to be considered, a number of factors need to be present including, but not limited to:

- The device being used for the fire is **designed for the cooking of food**, as its primary purpose. In addition, the fire officer in charge shall approve the device and its location, from a safety perspective.
- The fire will be small in nature, and would depend upon the heat from the embers for cooking, rather than from flame contact.
- When the food preparation was completed, the fire would be extinguished.
- The gathering of food and support goods after the arrival of the fire department will exclude consideration as a cooking fire.
- Fires on or in the ground will not be considered.

As a policy, the Grand Rapids Fire Department will **NOT** participate in efforts to orchestrate an exemption.

Some examples of Open Burning that are NOT allowed in the City of Grand Rapids are:

1. Outdoor Portable Fire Pits
2. Chimeneas
3. Recreational Fires

Enforcement:

Enforcement of this ordinance is the responsibility of the Grand Rapids Police Department.

It is the policy of the Fire Department to educate residents prior to pursuing relief from an enforcement mode.

Should the Fire Department respond to a report of an unauthorized burning, the officer in charge may choose to address the situation without activating the enforcement arm of the process. He/she may ask the occupant responsible for the fire to simply extinguish it, with or without the assistance of the Fire Company on scene. If the occupant agrees, the matter is considered closed. If the occupant refuses, Grand Rapids Police shall be notified.

Should the Fire Department encounter repeat violations of the ordinance, the fire officer is required to notify the Police Department.

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