



# Missouri Department of Natural Resources

## Facts on Open Burning Under Missouri Regulations

Air Pollution Control Program fact sheet

05/2020

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PUB2047

Open burning is the burning of any materials in which air contaminants are emitted directly into the air without first passing through a stack or chimney. This fact sheet summarizes allowable and prohibited open burning under Missouri regulations. It does not include open burning restrictions that city or county governments may impose in addition to Missouri's state regulations. Prior to conducting any open burning, businesses and citizens should contact the city or county of jurisdiction for any local restrictions.

The open burning of certain trade wastes and tires is prohibited because the toxic emissions that can be released are harmful to human health. Smoke from fires also typically produces large amounts of small particulate matter that can be inhaled, causing respiratory problems. The burning of common household trash, including paper products and food waste, can also have severe consequences. Studies have indicated the open burning of an individual household's trash could release pollutants in higher levels than the burning of the trash of thousands of homes by a municipal waste incinerator because the lower combustion temperatures prevent complete incineration. These pollutants can include dioxins, volatile organic compounds, acetaldehyde, formaldehyde, hydrogen chloride and naphthalene. Open burning exposes individuals to toxic emissions that may irritate the eyes, skin and upper respiratory tract. The central nervous system can also be affected, causing headaches, dizziness, and fatigue.

Because of these potential dangers, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources strongly discourages open burning of any material prior to investigating alternatives. Some rural areas can participate in a "green box" service, which provides a trash collection point near a centrally located county road for local residents to use. Green boxes are usually picked up or emptied once a week. Other options include waste disposal services, waste diversion, recycling and composting. Contact your local Solid Waste Management District for assistance in implementing these safer alternatives to open burning.

### Prohibited Open Burning Under State Regulation

Any waste generated by a business, trade, industry, salvage, or demolition operation cannot be burned unless it is untreated or vegetative wood waste. Wastes that may not be burned include but are not limited to tires, carpet, used oil, asphalt roofing material, rubber products, hazardous materials, Styrofoam™, plastics, petroleum-based products, durable goods, treated wood, and any asbestos-containing material.

### Allowable Open Burning Under State Regulations

**Note:** Local governments may have stricter laws and policies.

### Open Burning of Household Refuse

Missouri allows open burning of household refuse from residential premises with four dwelling units or less provided it is burned on the property owned by the party that generates it. This exemption does not apply to mobile home parks or apartment complexes. Household waste is solid waste produced by routine household activities, such as paper waste and garbage from daily activities. This does not include home remodeling waste, waste from home

businesses, durable goods such as appliances, carpets or furniture, tires or other non-routine household waste. Materials such as tires or used oil may not be used to start the fires or be burned in the fires.

## **Open Burning of Vegetative Wastes**

Missouri allows open burning of yard waste from sites provided it originates and is burned on the same premises. Materials such as tires or used oil may not be used to start the fires or be burned in the fires. Yard waste includes trees, tree leaves, brush or other vegetation.

## **Open Burning in Agricultural, Natural Resource or Land Management Operations**

Missouri allows the open burning of material associated with agricultural and forestry operations that is related to the growing or harvesting of crops. However, several exceptions apply. Materials such as tires or used oil may not be used to start the fires or be burned in the fires. Any burning that creates a public health hazard or produces smoke that impairs visibility for those operating motor vehicles or airplanes is prohibited. In an ozone non-attainment area between April 15 and Sept. 15, the person must notify the staff director in writing at least 48 hours prior to burning for pest or weed control or crop production.

## **Open Burning in Land Clearing Operations, Commercial and Non-Commercial Collection Operations**

Open burning of tree trunks, tree limbs, and vegetation from land clearing operations is allowed without an Air Curtain Incinerator if the burning takes place outside the city limits and is greater than 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure. Commercial land clearing operations inside the city limits or less than 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure must follow the requirements specified in the open burning rule. Materials such as tires or used oil may not be used to start the fires or be burned in the fires. Commercial and non-commercial collection operations where vegetative waste is generated off site must use an Air Curtain Incinerator if more than 80 cubic yards of vegetative waste per week is burned.

## **Open Burning at Wood Processing Facilities**

Open burning of untreated wood waste from wood processing facilities is allowed if production is less than 8,000 board feet per day and located more than a mile outside of an incorporated area. The burning also must be done at least 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure. Wood processing facilities producing more than 8,000 board feet per day that wish to burn more than 80 cubic yards of untreated wood waste per week must use an Air Curtain Incinerator.

## **Open Burning of Trade Waste**

The open burning of untreated wood waste from trade, construction, and demolition waste must be burned between sunrise and sunset, be supervised at all times, occur at least 200 yards away from the nearest structure not owned by the party conducting the burning unless an Air Curtain Incinerator is used and waivers are obtained from the owner or occupant of the structure or the local fire department provides approval. Waiver from the fire department to the owner of the Air Curtain Incinerator should be in writing. Any person burning more than 80 cubic yards of this untreated wood waste per week at a single location must use an Air Curtain Incinerator.

## **Air Curtain Incinerator**

When an Air Curtain Incinerator is required or used, please reference the Air Curtain Incinerator requirements of state rule 10 CSR 10-6.045 (3)(F). Prior to commencing construction of a stationary Air Curtain Incinerator, submit a notification of intent to construct and operate to the Air Pollution Control Program staff director, the planned initial startup date, and the types of materials to be burned using the Air Curtain Incinerator. The state rule also requires

initial and annual opacity testing and emission limitations. Each test is required to be submitted to the Department within sixty days of conducting the test.

## **Open Burning for Recreational Purposes**

Campfires and other fires used solely for recreational purposes, ceremonial occasions, or for outdoor non-commercial preparation of food are allowed in Missouri. Fires shall include only vegetative woody materials or untreated wood products.

## **Open Burning of Certain Trade Waste**

The open burning of certain trade wastes, such as explosives or hazardous waste may be allowed with written approval from the staff director and the fire control authority in that jurisdiction. Information submitted to the staff director must show that open burning is the only feasible method of disposal and that disposal is in the public interest.

The information provided in this fact sheet should not be construed to permit open burning that causes or constitutes a public health hazard, nuisance, or a hazard to vehicular or air traffic or violates any other rule or statute.

## **For Reference**

[10 CSR 10-6.045 Open Burning Requirements](#)

## **For More Information**

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
[Air Pollution Control Program](#)  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
800-361-4827 or 573-751-4817 office  
573-751-2706 fax

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
[Waste Management Program](#)  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
800-361-4827 or 573-751-5401 office  
573-526-3902 fax

Kansas City Air Quality Program  
Air Quality Section  
2400 Troost Ave., Suite 3200  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
816-513-6314  
816-513-6290 fax

St. Louis County Department of Health  
Air Pollution Control Section  
6121 North Hanley Road  
St. Louis, MO 63134  
314-615-8924

[www.stlouisco.com/HealthandWellness/EnvironmentalServices/AirPollutionControlProgram](http://www.stlouisco.com/HealthandWellness/EnvironmentalServices/AirPollutionControlProgram)

Email: [airpollution.doh@stlouisco.com](mailto:airpollution.doh@stlouisco.com)

Springfield Air Quality Control  
Department of Environmental Services  
P.O. Box 8368  
Springfield, MO 65801-8368  
417-864-1412

City of St. Louis Department of Health  
Air Pollution Control Program  
1520 Market Street  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
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**Nothing in this document may be used to implement any enforcement action or levy any penalty unless promulgated by rule under chapter 536 or authorized by statute.**

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**For more information**

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Air Pollution Control Program  
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Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
573-751-4817 or 800-361-4827  
<http://dnr.mo.gov/env/apcp/>

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