



City of Costa Mesa
Fire Prevention
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Open Burning/Outdoor Fires

PURPOSE

This guideline will provide information necessary for general safety precautions for outdoor fires. The requirements contained in this guideline are from California Fire Code (C.F.C.).

DEFINITIONS (According to C.F.C. 302)

OPEN BURNING - The burning of materials wherein products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney from an enclosed chamber. Open burning does not include recreational fires.

RECREATIONAL FIRE – An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, portable outdoor fireplace, barbeque grill, or barbeque pit and has a total fuel area of 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth, or similar purposes.

PORTABLE OUTDOOR FIREPLACE – A portable, outdoor, solid-fuel-burning fireplace that may be constructed of steel, concrete, clay, or other noncombustible material. A portable outdoor fireplace may be open in design, or may be equipped with a small hearth opening and a short chimney or chimney opening in the top.

PIT BARBECUE – Is the in-ground, non-commercial, cooking of large portions of meats or vegetables and is generally considered single events.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Open Burning

1. Must be permitted by the City of Costa Mesa Fire Department when conducted anywhere within the city limits. C.F.C. 307.2 Permits are issued through Fire Prevention
2. Approval from AQMD (South Coast Air Quality Management District) will be required with regard to weather conditions for the day of the “open burning”. C.F.C. 307.2.1
3. The **location** for open burning shall not be less than **50 feet** from any structure, and provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure. C.F.C. 307.4
4. The chief is authorized to require that open burning be immediately discontinued if the chief determines that smoke emissions are offensive to occupants of surrounding property, or if the open burning is determined by the chief to constitute a hazardous condition. C.F.C. 307.1.1
5. A garden hose connected to a water supply shall be readily available for use at open burning sites. C.F.C. 307.5
6. Open burning fires shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. C.F.C. 307.5

Recreational Fires

1. The **location** of recreational fires shall not be conducted within **25 feet** of a structure or combustible material. C.F.C. 307.4.2
2. A garden hose connected to a water supply shall be readily available for use at recreational fires sites. C.F.C 307.5
3. Recreational fires shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. C.F.C. 307.5

Portable outdoor fireplace and chiminea

1. Chiminea's and fireplaces intended for fires must be properly controlled and supervised and **located** with a minimum separation of **15-feet** from any structure, other combustibles and property lines.
*Exception: Portable outdoor fireplaces used at one- and two-family dwellings.
2. Fire will not be allowed in any appliance, which is not manufactured and intended for that use.
3. Chiminea's should not be placed directly on a wood deck, but should be placed on an iron stand with either three or four legs.
4. If flames are coming out of the neck of the chiminea then the fire is too big.

Pit Barbecue

1. Should be **located** with a minimum separation of **ten-feet** from any structure, other combustibles and property lines.
2. Must be properly controlled and supervised.
3. If the fire in the pit is designated as an unreasonable threat to the safety of the occupants or community, it shall be extinguished immediately.
4. The fire may also be asked to be extinguished by the volume or nature of the smoke and/or odor produced. (AQMD will be involved after 6 complaints)

Any fire which, in the opinion of the Fire Chief or their designee, poses an unreasonable threat to the safety and/or welfare of the community shall be deemed an "uncontrolled fire" and extinguished upon discovery.