



**Lake Havasu City Fire Department
Fire Prevention Bureau**

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FD Specification #13
**Open Burning, Recreational Fires, Portable Outdoor Fireplaces
& Weed Abatement**

2018 IFC, Ch. 3

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Page 1 of 4

OVERVIEW

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that many out-of-control fires occur when persons engaging in open burning and recreational fire activities fail to institute necessary safety precautions to prevent unwanted fire from occurring or to extinguish fire before it becomes unmanageable or disastrous.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Fire Department specification is to provide the minimum standards necessary to safely conduct open burning and meet the requirements set forth by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and to clarify regulations for recreational fires, portable outdoor fireplaces, and outdoor cooking fires as authorized by the Lake Havasu City Fire Department (LHCFD) Fire Marshal (FM).

SCOPE

This specification applies to open burning of in-ground weeds for homeowners, business owners, and landscape contractors. It is also intended to provide a guideline for regulated bonfires, recreational fires, and outdoor cooking fires.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Bonfire** – An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes including the open burning of cut trees, vegetation, or lumber.
2. **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 road flares, smudge pots and similar devices associated with safety or occupational uses typically considered open flames or recreational fires. For the purpose of this definition, a chamber must be regarded as enclosed when, during the time combustion occurs, only apertures, ducts, stacks, flues, or chimneys necessary to provide combustion air and permit the escape of exhaust gas are open.
3. **Open-flame cooking devices** – Appliances used to cook or warm food including but not limited to barbecues utilizing charcoal, natural gas, or liquefied petroleum gas (LP-Gas) burners.
4. **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.

5. **Recreational fire** – An outdoor burning of materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, barbecue grill, or pit. The total fuel area must be 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height, and be used for pleasure, religious or ceremonial reasons, cooking, warmth or similar purposes.
6. **Rubbish** - Waste material including, but not limited to, garbage, waste paper, and debris from construction or demolition.

PERMIT

1. Permits are required and may be issued as follows:
 - a. **Residential Burn Permits**
 1. May be issued to private citizens for weed abatement purposes exclusively and only on private residential premises. Established guidelines must be followed.
 2. Issued permits are non-renewable and valid for a period of 14-days to allow for weather conditions.
 3. The permit is only valid for the submitted location only and is non-transferable.
 - b. **Commercial Burn Permits**
 1. May be issued to accommodate commercial businesses or landscapers and maintenance personnel who are in possession of a valid Lake Havasu City Business License. The intent of this permit is for weed abatement only. Established guidelines must be followed.
 2. Issued permits are non-renewable and valid for a period of 14-days to allow for Conducive weather conditions.
 3. The permit is only valid for the submitted location only and is not transferable.
 - c. The FM or other authorized agent may cancel any or all burn permits for open burns, bonfires, or recreational fires when atmospheric or local circumstances make such fires hazardous. Permits must not be construed to relieve the permittee from liability resulting from the damages or the obligation to comply with other applicable laws, regulations, or ordinances.

REQUIREMENTS FOR WEED ABATEMENT, OPEN BURNING, OR BONFIRES

1. Combustible vegetation consisting of cut or uncut weeds, grass, vines and other vegetation must be removed when determined by the FM or an authorized agent to be a fire hazard. When the FM determines that total removal of growth is impractical due to size or environmental factors, approved fuel breaks must be established. Designated areas must be cleared of combustible vegetation to establish fuel breaks.
2. A permit is required for weed abatement, open burning, or bonfires. Open burning and bonfire permits will only be issued through the Fire Prevention Administrative Office.
3. The use of LPG with a torch or any other approved device for weed abatement is for in-ground weeds only.

4. Burning must be conducted during low-wind conditions and during daylight hours only. Smoke visibility impairment on traveled roads or airports, to the extent that a safety hazard results or otherwise creates a public nuisance, is prohibited.
5. Open burning and bonfires must be supervised at all times until completely extinguished.
6. Stored-pressure water fire extinguishers, charged garden hoses or other approved fire extinguishing equipment must be readily available and capable of reaching the entire burn area.
7. The person performing the burn must call the Police/Fire Dispatch non-emergency number at (298) 855-4111 immediately prior to and after burning.
8. Where burning is conducted on public property or the property of someone other than the permit applicant, proof must be demonstrated that permission to burn is obtained by the appropriate government agency, the owner, and/or the owner's authorized agent.
9. Open burning or bonfires must not be conducted within 50-feet of any structure or other combustible material.

Exception: Clearance from structures and other combustible material is allowed to be reduced to 15-feet when burning is conducted in a burning-appliance approved by the FM.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RECREATIONAL FIRES

1. A permit is not required for recreational fires, fires for warmth, or fires for cooking.
2. Recreational fires must not be conducted within 25-feet of a structure or combustible material unless contained in a barbecue pit or appliance.
3. Buckets, shovels, a garden hose with a water source, or a fire extinguisher with a minimum 4-A rating must be readily available.
4. Use of the following materials is forbidden: Rubbish, asphalt shingles, tar, plastic, rubber products, waste petroleum products, hazardous materials, explosive materials, and any other product, which compromises safety.
5. Recreational fires must be constantly attended by a responsible person knowledgeable in the use of fire extinguishing equipment.

REQUIREMENTS FOR OPEN-FLAME COOKING DEVICES

These requirements apply to the use and storage of open flame cooking devices on balconies, patios and decks of residential structures having more than two dwelling units (i.e., apartments, condominiums, and townhouses other than townhouses located on individual parcels).

NOTE: This regulation became effective on January 1, 2014.

1. Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices, including LP-Gas and natural gas, may not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10-feet of combustible construction including surrounding walls and overhangs.

Exceptions:

- a. One- and two-family *dwelling*s.
- b. Where buildings, balconies and decks are protected by an *automatic sprinkler system*.
- c. LP-gas cooking devices having LP-gas container with a water capacity not greater than 2¹/₂ pounds [nominal 1-pound LP-Gas capacity].

DISCONTINUANCE

The FM, fire suppression personnel, or other authorized agents may require that any open burning or recreational fires be discontinued if such fires are determined to constitute a hazardous condition. Permits may be revoked at any time for failure to follow established requirements.

REFERENCES

2018 International Fire Code, Ch. 3, §304 *Combustible Waste Material*

2018 International Fire Code, Ch. 3, §307 *Open Burning, Recreational Fires and Portable Outdoor Fireplaces*

2018 International Fire Code, Ch. 3, §308 *Open Flames*

Note: This FD specification is intended to be a guide only. For full installation, fire-flow, location, distribution, and maintenance requirements, refer to the references above. Where conflicts exist between this document and the applicable codes and standards, the above references must supersede.

APPROVED:  _____ DATE: September 01, 2021
Scott Hartman, Fire Marshal