



Town of Brookhaven Long Island, New York

Department of Building and Fire Prevention
Martin W. Haley, Commissioner

Fire Prevention Advisory

RECREATIONAL FIRES, OPEN BURNING, & BONFIRES

The following information is to provide clarification of the requirements for the use of fire pits, chimineas, and like appliances, as well as information regarding "open burning and bonfires".

"Open Burning"

What is "Open Burning"? The burning of debris for the purpose of ridding a property of rubbish, garbage and excess landscaping debris, including leaves, branches, grass and the like.

Open Burning is prohibited within the Town of Brookhaven without written approvals from the Division of Fire Prevention and the local Board of Fire Commissioners. If approvals are granted, there are restrictions as to the location a fire is conducted and distances from structures and adjacent properties. Please contact this office for more information.

"Bonfire"

What is a "Bonfire"? An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes i.e. organizational, school, religious events.

Bonfires are prohibited within the Town of Brookhaven without written approvals from the Division of Fire Prevention and the local Board of Fire Commissioners. If approvals are granted, there are restrictions as to the location a fire is maintained and distances from structures and adjacent properties. Please contact this office for more information.

"Recreational Fire"

What is a "Recreational Fire": An outdoor fire, burning materials ***other than rubbish*** for the purposes of; pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes. Recreational fires are permissible within the Town of Brookhaven without prior approval.

Most times the average homeowner is interested in a small outdoor fire for enjoyment by family and friends. This is known as a recreational fire. The Town of Brookhaven respects this interest, but is obligated to enforce the Fire Code of New York State, which requires the following, when maintaining a recreational fire:

- 1) A fire shall not be conducted within 25 feet of any structure or combustible materials. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.
Examples: Structures: decks, sheds, houses. Combustible Materials: fallen leaves, mulch.
- 2) The fuel area shall be contained and be 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height.
- 3) Fire shall be continuously attended until the fire is completely extinguished.
- 4) A method of immediate extinguishment of the fire, such as a garden hose (charged with water), fire extinguisher, water barrel with bucket, etc. shall be maintained at the ready at all times.

Other items to consider:

Wind: At times of high winds "breezy days" unintentional spread of fire can easily occur. Please refrain from igniting a recreational fire during these conditions.

Neighbors: Consider your neighbors as smoke from any fire will travel horizontally and can enter neighbor's homes through open windows or into their yard, where they may be enjoying the time outside.

Where local conditions dictate the Chief Fire Marshal has the authority to restrict any type of fire including "recreational fires".

Please feel free to contact the Division of Fire Prevention, should you have any questions or concerns, before you ignite any "open burn, bonfire or recreational fire".