



TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Fire Official Michael Roe
Fire Inspector Ed Garza
Fire Inspector Kevin Townsend
Office 201.529.5757
Fax 201.512.0537

Open Burning and Recreational Fires

There are multiple rules regarding fire pits in the Township of Mahwah depending upon the fuel the pit burns, the size of the container the fire is in and whether or not the fireplace structure is permanent and approved. Permanent masonry outdoor fireplaces and natural gas fueled fire bowls and log sets are regulated by the NJ Uniform Construction Code (UCC) requirements, and are not subject to the rules below. Citronella candles and other types of small table-top candles are permitted, but adequate clearances should be maintained to combustibles.

All other forms of open burning are regulated by the NJ Uniform Fire Code (UFC) and enforced by the Mahwah Township Bureau of Fire Prevention. Open burning of any kind is prohibited on public property; including parks, alleyways, streets, sidewalks and public recreation areas without a fire permit. Open burning includes, but may not be limited to portable open burning clay solid fueled fireplaces known as "chimeneas," small round "campground" fireplaces, bonfires, elevated torches known as tiki torches, and sky lanterns, fireworks of any kind (including "firecrackers and "sparklers"), and rubbish.

The fire must be in an approved container and not located within 15 feet of the structure. You must also follow all manufacturer instructions. You can only burn dried fire wood with small amounts of paper as kindling to start the fire. Lastly you will need the fire extinguishing capability meeting a minimum of 4A rating per fire pit. This would be one 4A fire extinguisher per pit or one garden hose that easily reaches all fire pits. Lastly follow practices when disposing of the ashes.

Bonfires are not permitted to be lit or maintained without a permit from the Mahwah Township Bureau of Fire Prevention. The burning of leaves, rubbish, or other waste vegetation is prohibited. The rules for open burning and recreational fires as outlined in the International Fire Code, New Jersey Edition (2015) appear below.

NJ Uniform Fire Code Rules Regarding Open Burning and Recreational Fires

For all types of open burning except fireplaces inside single family dwellings:

Chapter 2 Definitions: 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 (914 mm) or less in diameter and 2 feet (610 mm) or less in height for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purposes.



TOWNSHIP OF MAHWAH FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Fire Official Michael Roe
Fire Inspector Ed Garza
Fire Inspector Kevin Townsend
Office 201.529.5757
Fax 201.512.0537

307.4.2 Recreational fires. Recreational fires shall not be conducted within 25 feet (7620 mm) of a structure or combustible material. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet (7620 mm) of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition. Fires in approved containers shall be permitted, provided that such fires are not less than 15 feet (4572 mm) from any structure.

307.4.3 Portable outdoor fireplaces. Portable outdoor fireplaces shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall not be operated within 15 feet (3048 mm) of a structure or combustible material. Exception: Portable outdoor fireplaces used at one-and two-family dwellings.

307.5 Attendance. Open burning, bonfires, recreational fires and use of portable outdoor fireplaces shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher complying with Section 906 with a minimum 4-A rating or other approved on-site fire-extinguishing equipment, such as dirt, sand, water barrel, garden hose or water truck, shall be available for immediate utilization.

- Barbeque Grills and Charcoal burners (Section 308.1.4) "Charcoal burners, other open-flame cooking devices, and outdoor fireplaces shall not be operated or stored on combustible balconies or decks or within 5 feet (1524 mm) of combustible construction."

The same rules apply to Liquid Propane (LPG) barbeque grills (Section 308.1.4.1).

There are other rules regarding open burning and recreational fires. If the type of fire you wish to maintain does not appear in these rules, please contact our office prior to your event to ensure that the burning is permitted.

Agricultural burns are regulated by the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection State Forestry Services, Forest Fire Service.

Safe ash disposal recommendations

From NFPA and USFA

Allow ashes to cool for several days before disposing. Dispose of ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep the ash container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Douse and saturate the ashes with water.