



# OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Larry Hogan  
Governor  
Brian S. Geraci  
State Fire Marshal

--- MEDIA RELEASE ---  
For Immediate Release

## MARYLAND OPEN AIR BURNING AND BURN BAN QUESTIONS ANSWERED

**STATEWIDE** (May 23, 2016) – Marylanders are reminded of safety and jurisdictional requirements when burning outdoors. Open air burning is defined as a fire where any material is burned in the open or in a receptacle other than a furnace, incinerator, or other equipment connected to a stack or chimney. It also includes other fires such as campfires.

**Alternatives to open air burning include: composting, disposal at a local landfill where the yard debris can be turned into mulch or periodic curbside pick-up by your regular trash collector (where available).**

If you must burn, take the time to ensure that all safety and regulatory precautions have been taken. Permits may be required for all open air burning except for small recreational fires such as campfires. The permit from the Department of Natural Resources is in addition to and does not substitute for a permit from the local health department. For permit information, please call your local health department, fire department or contact the Department of Natural Resources Forest Service Office at (410) 260-8531 or go online at: <http://dnr2.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/wfm.aspx>

Tips for open air burning:

- Don't burn on windy days.
- Have hand tools and a ready water supply on site.
- Never leave the fire unattended.
- Clear the area around the site for a minimum of ten feet.
- Burn at a safe distance (25' or more) from your home, shed or other structures.
- Never use gasoline! Gasoline fumes can ignite and cause serious injury and possible death.
- Check your local and state regulations before burning.

Hazardous items are never allowed to be burned. Proper disposal of hazardous items such as tires, plastics, aerosol cans, oil, etc., can be disposed of through means provided by your local government.

The Maryland State Fire Marshal, Brian S. Geraci states, **“Marylanders need to use caution when burning outdoors. The expense associated with extinguishment of out of control fires can be easily controlled by being attentive and following established guidelines provided by local authorities.”**

The MDE open burning ban is in effect annually between June 1 and September 1. This burn ban involves the following counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles

Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's and Baltimore City. The ban does not affect backyard barbeque grilling or open fires for recreational purposes, such as campfires. For more information on the burn ban contact Maryland Department of the Environment Office of Air Quality at (410) 537-3231 or go online at:

<http://www.mde.maryland.gov/programs/researchcenter/>

Open Air Burning regulations are enforced by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Violations carry fines up to \$1000 and/or one year in prison. The landowner can be charged with all of the costs associated with extinguishing the fire. Even small campfires can cause wildfires if they are not fully extinguished. Soak the coals with lots of water and make sure they are out cold!

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The Office of the State Fire Marshal is an agency of the Department of State Police dedicated to helping protect citizens from fire and explosion through a comprehensive program of education, inspection, investigation and fire protection engineering. For more information on fire safety call 1-800-525-3124, log onto our website at:

[Maryland State Fire Marshal](#) and/or our [Facebook Page](#).

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