



April 24, 2008

To: All Personnel

From: Fire Marshal, Simonian

RE: OPEN BURNING COMPLAINTS

As of September 1, 2005 the State of Ohio adopted its new Fire Code. The new fire code now addresses opening burning, recreational fires and outdoor fires in manufactured fireplaces. To help you make a determination of defining what type of fire is burning please review the following guidelines:

BONFIRE: An outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes.

- Must be issued a permit and adheres to strict fire safety guidelines.
- This is a large fire that does not fall within the definitions of a recreational fire or open burning.

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, smudgepots and similar devices associated with safety or occupational uses typically considered open flames or recreational fires. For the purpose of this definition, a chamber shall be regarded as enclosed when, during the time of combustion occurs, only apertures, ducts, stacks, flues or chimneys necessary to provide combustion air and permit the escape of exhaust gas are open.

- Any fire which size is greater than defined as a recreational fire would be considered open burning.
- Must be issued a permit and adhere to strict safety guidelines.
- Shall not be conducted within 50' of a structure (includes combustible fencing).
- Shall not be conducted in an area where conditions could cause the fire to spread within 50' of a structure.

RECREATIONAL FIRES: An outdoor fire burning materials other than rubbish where the fuel being burned is not contained in an incinerator, outdoor fireplace, barbecue grill or barbecue 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.

- This is a campfire – anything larger than the dimensions allowed would define the fire as open burning regardless of its intended use.
- Shall not be conducted within 25' of a structure (includes combustible fencing).
- Shall not be conducted in an area where conditions could cause the fire to spread within 25' of a structure.

As with all written codes, exceptions to the rule may be established. This is the area where your involvement likely will come into play. ***If an outdoor fire is conducted within an approved container the fire shall be located at least 15' from a structure (includes combustible fencing).*** An approved

container is a UL Listed manufactured outdoor fireplace. The fire shall be conducted per manufactures recommendations. This includes the following:

- Placement of a protective hood or screen during times of combustion.
- No use of a combustible liquid to start the fire.
- Fire size shall be appropriate for the container.
- Only seasoned wood shall be used – no yard waste, paper, lumber, etc.
- The fire shall be attended at all times during combustion.
- A means to extinguish the fire shall be readily available.
- Atmospheric conditions shall be acceptable to allow the smoke to rise in the atmosphere. If **SMOKE OR SMOKE ODOR** is a problem you shall direct the resident to put the fire out.

Any violation to this section of the Ohio Fire Code shall warrant the issuance of a citation for violation of OAC 1307:7-7-03. Extinguish the fire and contact the Police Department for issuance of a citation. Forward a copy of all Open Burning reports to the Fire Prevention Office. Also, obtain complainer's information such as name, phone number, and address for purposes of a follow-up.

Remember that it is your determination if an outdoor fire is within proper limitations. If you feel a fire is unsafe you are empowered to have the resident put it out. Any fire that is causing a public nuisance shall be put out. A public nuisance is defined as causing discomfort to more than one person. For instance, multiple complaints reported from multiple residents involving a particular fire.

It is safe and wise to have at least two firefighters investigate any open burning complaint. A prudent response would be to send the engine crew on all complaints. Please forward any questions to the Fire Prevention Office.