



DPS

Montgomery County
Department of Permitting Services

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240-777-0311
311 in Montgomery County
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Guidance for Use of Fire Pits, Fire Bowls and Chimineas in One- and Two-Family Homes Including Townhomes

The Use of Fire Pits, Fire Bowls, Chimineas and other similar appliances has become popular in our community. The Department of Permitting Services would like to share with you the criteria for their use.

- You must have permission from the land owner.
- There must be one person at least 18 years of age to assume responsibility for the use of these appliances.
- Use in accordance to the manufacturer's guidelines. Once you purchase this appliance, keep these guidelines in a safe place for future reference.
- We strongly recommend keeping Fire Pits, Fire Bowls, Chimineas and similar devices at least 10 feet away from your home. Keep a clear area of at least 3 feet in diameter around the appliance. Please remember that mulch can burn so keep your appliance at least 3 feet away from mulch as well.
- We strongly recommend you not use Fire Pits, Fire Bowls, Chimineas on a balcony or deck.
- Burn only aged dried wood. The burning of any type of construction material, brush or other trash is prohibited.
- Do not use any type of flammable or combustible liquid at any time.
- Have a garden hose connected to a constant water source available and close by.
- Smoke should not cross property lines into your neighbor's home. Be mindful of the wind speed prior to starting a fire.
- Do not use on Code Orange or Code Red Air Quality days.
- Dispose of all ashes in a safe manner. After 24 hours has passed, all left over hot ashes must be thoroughly dampened, cooled and stored in a metal can that is used solely for ash storage. Ashes that are 2 or 3 days old may appear to be safe, but can still retain enough heat to cause an unwanted fire. Do not discard hot ashes in a compost pile, paper bag cardboard box or anything that is combustible. Also, be careful in handling partially burned wood. The wood may still be smoldering and cause a serious burn.

Please keep in mind, that if the Fire Department is contacted and determines your situation to be a fire hazard, the Fire Department can and will extinguish your fire.

If additional questions arise, please call the Office of Fire Code Compliance at 240-777-0311.

