

# COOL YOUR ASHES!

Every year **“cold ashes”** result in house fires.

**FACT:** Many people don't realize the length of time required for ashes to cool enough for disposal. Coals and ashes from fires can remain hot enough to reignite and start a fire for many days after the fire is out. The exact amount of time for complete extinguishment and cooling depends on many factors such as how hot the fire was, what was burning, how much unburned fuel remains, etc.

**BE SAFE:** Treat ALL ashes and coals as HOT ashes, even when you think they had time enough to cool. Take care to dispose of them wisely. Your house, deck or garage are unsafe locations for storing ashes while they cool and have been the site of many recent and devastating fires both locally and nationally. Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep it outside and at least 10 feet from your home or nearby buildings.

## Montgomery County Fire Officials Recommend These Top 5 Safety Tips:



**DO NOT** remove hot ashes from a fireplace immediately. When possible, allow ashes and coals to cool in the area where you had the fire for several days. These devices are designed to contain their heat safely.

When it's time to dispose of the ashes, transfer them to a metal container and wet them down. Only use an approved metal ash bucket that has a tight fitting metal lid to safely store cooled ashes. **NEVER** dispose of ashes in a paper or plastic bag, cardboard box, plastic container or bucket because it can easily ignite and **DO NOT** place any other combustibles in the metal container.

**DO NOT** dispose of ashes outside on a windy day. The wind can whip up what may have seemed like cool embers, making them fiery hot and sending them airborne which could ignite nearby combustibles.

Store the container **OUTSIDE**, away from your house and other structures including garages, decks, porches, fences, wood piles or other combustible materials.

**NEVER** use a vacuum cleaner to pick up ashes.

Call 311 for a **FREE** Home Safety Check



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