Your Health Matters

Burning natural vegetation, such as lawn clippings, leaves, and tree trimmings produces harmful air pollutants. Breathing these pollutants can have serious health impacts. Those at greatest risk are children, the elderly, and those suffering from chronic respiratory conditions, such as asthma, emphysema and bronchitis.

The Washington State Legislature regulates burning to protect public health and is phasing out certain types of burning in many areas of the state.

Please burn responsibly.

northwest Clean Air agency | *Serving Island, Skagit & Whatcom Counties*

The Northwest Clean Air Agency is the governmental agency responsible for ensuring compliance with federal, state and local air quality regulations in Island, Skagit and Whatcom counties. The agency also sponsors voluntary programs to further improve air quality.

Please call if you have questions about any of the following topics:

- Air Quality Complaint
- Asbestos
- Climate Change
- Outdoor Burning/ Burn Bans
- Heating with Wood
- Indoor Air Quality
- Public Information
- Permitting

For more information about these or other services, please visit us on the web at **www.nwcleanair.org.**

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Outdoor Burning

In Island, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties

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northwest Clean Air agency | *Serving Island, Skagit & Whatcom Counties*

General Outdoor Burning Rules

WAC 173-425, RCW 70.94, NWCAA Regulation 502

If you live in an area where burning is allowed and choose to burn, please follow these guidelines:

- **What can be burned?** It is only legal to burn natural vegetation.
- **Burn Barrels**—Burning in barrels is prohibited statewide.
- **Nuisance**—Smoke, odor or ash that unreasonably impacts neighboring properties is illegal.
- **Construction and demolition debris**—Materials resulting from a construction, renovation or demolition project cannot be burned.
- **Check permit requirements** (See "Permit Information" for contact numbers.)
- **Check the weather**—Don't burn during periods of air stagnation or when the winds exceed 7 mph.
- **Check the burn ban status before burning** (See "Burn Ban Information" for contact numbers.)

Burn Bans

There are several different types of burn bans:

- **A burn ban due to impaired air quality** is announced when air pollutants are measured at unhealthy levels. No outdoor burning is allowed during this period.
- **A burn ban due to high fire danger** is announced by fire officials during extended periods of dry weather.
- **A permanent burn ban** prohibits all residential and land-clearing fires in cities and urban growth areas.

Violation of outdoor burning laws may result in fines of up to $14,000.

Permanent Burn Ban Areas

Washington State law is phasing-out outdoor burning to protect public health. Residential yard debris and land-clearing burning is banned in all urban growth areas (UGA) and the following cities/towns:

Island County: Coupeville, Freeland*, Langley and Oak Harbor

Skagit County: Anacortes, Bay View*, Burlington, Concrete, Hamilton, La Conner, Lyman, Mount Vernon, Sedro-Woolley, and March Point*

Whatcom County: Bellingham, Birch Bay*, Blaine, Cherry Point*, Columbia Valley* (Paradise Valley, Peaceful Valley, Kendall), Everson, Ferndale, Nooksack, and Sumas

To find out what alternatives to burning are available in your area, visit www.nwcleanair.org.

***UGAs not associated with a city or town. Call your local planning department for UGA boundaries.**

Definitions of Burning Types

Recreational fires are three feet in diameter or smaller, consist only of charcoal or firewood, and are used for cooking or pleasure. Call your fire department for permit requirements.

Residential fires are for disposal of leaves, clippings, and other yard and garden debris generated on-site. All residential fires in Island and Whatcom counties require a permit. In Skagit County, residential fires larger than four feet in diameter require a permit.

Land-clearing fires are for disposal of natural vegetation generated from land-clearing projects and require a written permit.

Silvicultural fires are forestry burns in areas where the land will be replanted with trees and is not being cleared for other uses. Silvicultural fires require a written permit.

Alternatives to Burning

To learn about what you can do, contact your Solid Waste Department:

Camano Island ..... 360.629.4522 ext. 7386
Island County 360.679.7386
Skagit County ..... 360.336.9400 ext. 3124
Whatcom County 360.676.7695

Burn Ban Information

Skagit County ..... 360.428.1617 ext. 4
Island & Whatcom Counties ... 800.622.4627 ext. 4

Permit Information

Recreational, Residential & Land-clearing:

Call your local fire department if you live within city limits. Call one of the numbers below if you live outside city limits.

Island County:
North & Central Whidbey 360.679.7343
South Whidbey ..... 360.321.5111 ext. 7343
Camano Island ..... 360.629.4523 ext. 7343

Skagit County:
Phone 360.428.3293
Pager 360.738.5822

Whatcom County:
Burn Information Line 360.676.6934

Silvicultural

Washington State Department of Natural Resources 360.856.3500

General Information

Skagit County ..... 360.428.1617 ext. 4
Island & Whatcom Counties ... 800.622.4627 ext. 4