

# Chesterfield Fire and EMS

## Fire and Life Safety Division - Fire Marshal's Office

P.O. Box 40 Chesterfield, VA 23832 Phone (804) 748-1426 Fax (804) 768-8766



### CEREMONIAL BONFIRE REGULATIONS

1. Open burning does not exempt or excuse a person from the consequence, damages or injuries which may result from such conduct, nor does it excuse or exempt any person from complying with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and orders of the federal government, Commonwealth of Virginia and/or Chesterfield County.
2. A bonfire is an outdoor fire utilized for ceremonial purposes.
3. Burning of the following is **prohibited**:
  - a. Toxic or hazardous materials or containers for such materials.
  - b. Rubber tires, asphaltic material, crankcase oil, impregnated wood, or similar materials
  - c. Paper, used lumber or trade waste.
  - d. Building and/or demolition material.
  - e. Household/commercial trash or refuse.
4. A **“written permit”** is recommended for all ceremonial bonfires.
  - a. The permit application shall be submitted at least **15 days** before the desired burn date.
  - b. The permit will be valid for the day of the bonfire only.
  - c. Only one bonfire shall be ignited at a time and shall not **exceed 5’ x 5’ x 5’** in size.
  - d. Only clean wood or firewood is allowed to be used as fuel.
  - d. If the applicant is not the property owner **written permission** shall be obtained from the property owner/representative (ie. Principal is acceptable for school property)
5. **Campfires and warming fires** are allowed if the fuel is clean wood **ONLY**. A permit is not required.
6. **The burning of leaves** is allowed in **designated areas** of the county during two time periods each year. A permit is NOT required. It is lawful to burn leaves on your own property, if in an allowed area, during the periods of March 15 to April 15, from 4:00 p.m. to midnight, Monday through Thursday and from November 15 to December 15 from 8:00 a.m. on Monday to noon on Friday.
7. The burning of limbs, tree trunks, logs or stumps is considered Property Maintenance or Land Clearing and is not allowed under the conditions of bonfire permit. Contact the Fire and Life Safety Division for details.
8. The burning of tree and garden trimmings requires a thirty (30) day permit and is not allowed under the conditions of bonfire permit. Contact the Fire and Life Safety Division for details.
9. **The following applies to ALL open burning in Chesterfield County:**
  - a. **Fires shall be constantly attended** by a competent person until it is extinguished and no longer smoldering.
  - b. The attendee shall provide adequate fire extinguishing equipment to control and/or extinguish the fire should it start to spread or get out of control.
  - c. The Virginia Division of Forestry requires that any open burning from February 15 through April 30 of each year, within 300 feet of woodland, brushland, or field containing dry grass or other combustible material leading to woodland, be done between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight.
10. **Failure to comply with the above conditions will constitute a violation of the law, which will result in possible legal action.**