Every year the Omaha Fire Department receives numerous questions from citizens on what constitutes a safe fire and what is and isn't legal when dealing with recreational burning. It is important to know these requirements so outdoor burning can remain safe and enjoyable. **Failure to follow good safety practices with these fires can lead to serious injuries and property damage!**

There are a few types of outdoor burning that would be legal within the City of Omaha without the issuance of a “burn permit” from the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Omaha Fire Department. This would include:

- Cooking in standard barbecue equipment
- Use of an outdoor fireplace or “portable” outdoor fireplace
- Fire contained within a “barbecue pit or ring”

**The burning of leaves, grass clippings, brush, trash, construction debris, or any other type of rubbish for the purpose of salvage or destruction is strictly prohibited and may result in a criminal citation for violation of Omaha Municipal Code 30-92 “Burning”.

**Failure to follow the rules set forth are a violation of Omaha Municipal Code 46-1 “Adoption of International Fire Code” and may result in a Criminal Citation.**

Fuel for open flame cooking, outdoor fireplaces, and “barbecue pits” shall be limited to Charcoal; Clean, dry “fire wood”; Commercial “fire logs”; and/or clean untreated lumber; natural gas; or Liquified Petroleum (LP)-gas.

**Cooking in standard barbecue equipment**

- Use of charcoal and other open flame cooking devices is strictly prohibited and shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet of combustible construction. The exceptions are:
  - One- and two- family dwellings.
  - Where buildings, balconies, and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.
  - Liquified-petroleum-gas-fueled cooking devices having an LP-gas container with a water capacity not greater than 2.5 pounds (nominal 1 pound LP-gas capacity).

*Pictured is an example of what would be acceptable for use on a combustible balcony or within 10 feet of combustible construction in which the buildings, balconies, and decks are not protected by an automatic sprinkler system.*
**Use of a portable “outdoor fireplace”**

- The use of a portable “outdoor fireplace” is permitted within the City of Omaha.
- Fuel for the portable “outdoor fireplace” shall be limited to Charcoal; Clean, dry “fire wood”; Commercial “fire logs”; and/or clean untreated lumber.
- A portable “outdoor fireplace” shall be at least 15 feet from a combustible structure. This would include a deck or overhang. The exception would be portable “outdoor fireplaces” used at one- and two-family dwellings. *(Please note: The Omaha Fire Department does not recommend using a portable outdoor fire place within 15 feet of any combustible construction.)*
- A portable “outdoor fireplace” shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.
- A fire extinguisher (rating of 4A or greater), garden hose, or some other means of extinguishment shall be available for immediate utilization.
- Sustained complaints of hazardous, objectionable, or offensive smoke will result in an order of extinguishment by the Omaha Police or Fire Departments. For questions or details regarding smoke nuisances, contact Omaha Air Quality Control at 402-444-6015.

**Fires contained within a “barbecue pit”**

- Fires contained within a non-combustible “barbecue pit or ring” are permitted within the City of Omaha.
- Un-contained “recreational” fires, or ordinary camp fires, are **not** permitted within the City of Omaha.
• The Omaha Fire Department recommends that the non-combustible walls of a barbecue pit be a minimum of 12 inches in height and that the inner diameter of the barbecue pit does not exceed 60 inches.
• Fuel for a “barbecue pit” shall be limited to Charcoal; Clean, dry “fire wood”; Commercial “fire logs”; and/or clean untreated lumber.
• Fires contained within a “barbecue pit” shall be at least 15 feet from a combustible structure. This would include a deck or overhang.
• Fires contained within a “barbecue pit” shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished.
• A fire extinguisher (rating of 4A or greater), garden hose, or some other means of extinguishment shall be available for immediate utilization.
• The “burn pile” (or fuel pile) within the “barbecue pit” shall not exceed 36 inches in diameter and 24 inches in height. Fires with a “burn pile” larger than 36” x 24” would be considered a “bon fire” and would require the issuance of a “burn permit” from the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Omaha Fire Department.
• Sustained complaints of hazardous, objectionable, or offensive smoke will result in an order of extinguishment by the Omaha Police or Fire Departments. For questions or details regarding smoke nuisances, contact Omaha Air Quality Control at 402-444-6015

For additional information regarding “burning” within the City of Omaha, please contact the Omaha Fire Prevention Bureau at 402-444-5711.