



Serving Island, Skagit & Whatcom Counties

## 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

1600 South Second Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273-5202

ph 360.428.1617  
fax 360.428.1620

[www.nwcleanair.org](http://www.nwcleanair.org)

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## Outdoor Burning

**In Island, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties**

Revised July 2013



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

Residential and land-clearing burning was permanently banned within the city limits and urban growth areas\* of Anacortes, Bellingham, Burlington, Ferndale, Lynden, Mount Vernon, Oak Harbor, and Sedro-Woolley on January 1, 2001.

**Beginning January 1, 2007**, the permanent burn ban of residential yard debris and land-clearing fires extends to the following cities and all urban growth areas:

**Island County:** Coupeville and Langley

**Skagit County:** Concrete, Hamilton, La Conner, Lyman, Bay View and March Point

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

To find out what alternatives to burning are available in your area, visit [www.nwcleanair.org](http://www.nwcleanair.org).

\* Contact your local planning department if you have questions about urban growth boundaries or visit [www.nwcleanair.org](http://www.nwcleanair.org).

### 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.

## 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

Island, Skagit & Whatcom .....360.428.1617 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 ..... 360.679.7350  
South Whidbey ..... 360.321.5111 ext. 7350  
Camano Island ..... 360.629.4522 ext. 7350

**Skagit County:**

General information ..... 360.336.9410  
Burn permits .....360.419.7789

**Whatcom County:**

Burn Information Line ..... 360.676.6934

**General Information**

Island, Skagit & Whatcom ..... 360.428.1617 ext. 4