



# CITY OF MADISON FIRE DEPARTMENT

## Fire Prevention Division

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### OUTDOOR AND OPEN BURNING

The Madison General Ordinance (34.13 and 34.14) and the State Fire Code prohibit outdoor and open burning without a permit. Fire Codes do permit fires for cooking and approved outdoor fireplaces. The Fire Department does not permit the burning of yard waste, construction debris, brush, etc.

**Campfires** are only permitted in approved campgrounds. Madison does not have any approved campgrounds.

**Outdoor fireplaces** are available through many local department stores. They must be used in accordance with all of the manufacturer's safety requirements and meet the following conditions:

- 1) The fireplace must be an assembly that includes a bowl or pit for holding the wood, a method of containing embers and sparks, and supports to ensure clearances to combustibles. The fireplace must have a set of user instructions.
- 2) Only dry wood is permitted. If anything other than dry wood is used, the Fire Department may respond and extinguish the fire and a citation may be issued.
- 3) The fireplace cannot be used within 15 feet of a building or lot line.
- 4) The smoke cannot create a nuisance (i.e., for other properties, travel, or the health of others).
- 5) The fireplace cannot be used on a wood deck, porch, or patio.
- 6) A fire extinguisher, garden hose, or other method of first aid fire control must be readily available.
- 7) The fireplace must be supervised AT ALL TIMES by a responsible adult. The fire must be completely extinguished before the fireplace is left unsupervised.
- 8) All spark screens must be in place.

**Clay fireplaces** (Chimineas) are also permitted in Madison. They must meet all of the requirements listed above for outdoor fireplaces as well as the following:

- 1) Must have a spark arrester on the flue and a spark screen to cover the opening.
- 2) **Do not use within (4) four feet of any combustible materials or in high winds.**

**LP-assisted ignition fireplaces:** They must meet all of the requirements listed above for outdoor fireplaces as well as the following:

- 1) Do NOT store/use gasoline or other flammable liquids in the vicinity of this unit.
- 2) Never leave hose assembly connected when wood is burning.
- 3) Once the wood is burning, immediately turn the regulator knob to "OFF" and disconnect the LP bottle and hose assembly.

**Cooking fires** are fires ignited and maintained for the express purpose of cooking food for human consumption. Once the cooking is complete, the fire must be extinguished. If the Fire Department responds, and food is not being prepared, they will extinguish the fire. A citation may be issued. The size of the fire must be appropriate for use as a cooking fire. It is always the discretion of the Fire Officer to determine if the fire is intended for cooking.

**Charcoal & LP-Gas Grills and other Open-Flame Cooking Devices:** *Be sure to read the owner's manual!*

- 1) **Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices** shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction. (Exceptions: one- and two-family dwellings and/or where buildings and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system). Make sure the coals are completely cooled down with water before disposing of them. Make sure all ashes are contained in a non-combustible container.
- 2) **LP-gas burners** having an LP-gas container with a water capacity greater than 2.5 pounds (1.14 kg) [nominal 1 pound (0.454 kg) LP-gas capacity] shall not be located on combustible balconies or within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction. (Exception: one- and two-family dwellings).

#### **Weather conditions:**

It is important to consider weather conditions when using an outdoor fireplace or grill. Wind direction, humidity, and barometric pressure all affect smoke travel.

#### **Fire Department responses to complaints:**

If the Fire Department receives a complaint, they will respond and can, at the discretion of the Fire Officer, extinguish the fire for any violation of above conditions, or, if the fire is creating a hazard or nuisance. A citation may be issued for any violation of the above conditions.