



# Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department Office of the Fire Marshal

1225 Courthouse Road, PO BOX 339, Stafford, VA 22555  
(540) 658-8648 · [www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm](http://www.staffordfirerescue.com/fm)



<b>Prohibited Burning</b>	<b>Code Section</b>
The burning of garbage, refuse, trash, rubbish, tires, oil, solid or liquid waste, hazardous materials, rubber, petroleum based materials such as plastics, or building/construction materials is PROHIBITED at all times.	SCC 12-52

Burning Activity	Open Burning Category	Notification and Attendance Required	Permit Needed	Min. Distance to Any Structure or Combustible Materials	Min. Distance to Neighboring and Occupied Structure	Maximum Size or Duration	4PM to Midnight 2/15 to 4/30 <small>COV § 10.1-1142</small>	Prohibited May through September <small>9VAC5-130-40</small>
Bonfire	Recreational	Yes	No	50ft	50ft	5ft x 5ft 3 Hours	Yes	No
Campfire, fire pit, etc.	Recreational	Yes	No	25ft	25ft	3ft x 2ft 3 Hours	Yes	No
Open container, burn barrel, etc.	Recreational	Yes	No	25ft	25ft	2ft x 3ft 3 Hours	Yes	No
Leaves, brush, trimmings, etc.	Residential	Yes	No	50ft	300ft <sup>(1)</sup>	N/A	Yes	No
Agricultural, farms, etc.	Residential	Yes	No	50ft	300ft <sup>(1)</sup>	N/A	Yes	No
Non-residential, site development	Land Clearing	Yes	Yes <sup>(2)</sup>	50ft	1000ft <sup>(1)(3)</sup> 2500ft <sup>(3)(4)</sup>	N/A <sup>(5)</sup>	Yes	Yes
New house or neighborhood site clearing	Land Clearing	Yes	Yes <sup>(2)</sup>	50ft	1000ft <sup>(1)(3)</sup> 2500ft <sup>(3)(4)</sup>	N/A <sup>(5)</sup>	Yes	Yes
Road, pipeline, or construction site clearing	Land Clearing	Yes	Yes <sup>(2)</sup>	50ft	1000ft <sup>(1)(3)</sup> 2500ft <sup>(3)(4)</sup>	N/A <sup>(5)</sup>	Yes	Yes
BBQ grills	Not Open Burning	No	No	10ft <sup>(6)(7)</sup>	10ft <sup>(6)(7)</sup>	Manufacturer's Instructions	No	No
Outdoor fireplace, closed container, "Chimineas", etc.	Not Open Burning	No	No	15ft <sup>(6)</sup>	15ft <sup>(6)</sup>	Manufacturer's Instructions	No	No

- (1) Written permission required to reduce distance [SCC 12-54(a)(2) & SCC 12-54(c)(3)]
- (2) Prohibited within the Urban Services Area [SCC 12-54(c)(5)]
- (3) Reduction to 300ft and 1000ft with an approved special incineration device [SCC 12-55(b)]
- (4) Minimum distance to airfields, schools or healthcare facilities [SCC 12-54(c)(4)]
- (5) Fires are not to be fed from Friday noon until Monday 7AM [SCC 12-54(c)(6)]
- (6) Does not apply when used at one/two family dwellings [VSFPC 307.4.3 and VSFPC 308.1.4]
- (7) Does not apply where buildings, decks, and balconies are sprinklered or if only using small propane cylinders (2.5lbs or less). [VSFPC 308.1.4]



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Guidelines and Specifications For:

## Burn Permits (Land Clearing Debris Burning)

### Applicable Codes and Standards:

VSFPC - Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (2012)

SCC - Stafford County Code (Chapter 12)

VAC - Virginia Administrative Code

General Requirements	Code Section
Permit applications shall be submitted at least <b>10 days prior</b> to the date of burning. Applications are available online or by calling 540-658-7200 and must be mailed in, faxed, or dropped off in person. The permit fee is \$200 and the term is 90 days.	SCC 12-55 VSFPC 307.2
In addition to the application, a <b>map or plat</b> of the property must be submitted that shows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The property location in the County with parcel number and zoning</li> <li>2) The purpose of the proposed burning and desired dates of burning</li> <li>3) The location of the proposed burning site and materials to be burned</li> <li>4) Distances to neighboring occupied dwellings</li> <li>5) Distances to other buildings or structures located on or near the site</li> </ol>	SCC 12-55(d)
The Northern Virginia Volatile Organic Compounds Emissions Control Area, including all of Stafford County, <b>prohibits</b> land clearing burning (burn permits) during the months of <b>May, June, July, August and September</b> .	SCC 12-54(e) 9VAC5-130-40(8)
Land clearing debris burning activities (burn permits) are <b>prohibited</b> at all times within the Urban Services Area of Stafford County.	SCC 12-55(b)(5)
Once approved, an applicant must call the Fire Marshal's Office to schedule a site inspection. Once the permit is issued, you must call the <b>Stafford County Emergency Communication Center at 540-658-4440 EACH TIME</b> you commence and cease burning.	SCC 12-52(g)
Any permit holder found in violation shall have their permit revoked for 60 days or until court action restores the permit. Any person violating or failing to comply with open burning regulations shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor and each violation or failure to comply shall constitute a separate offense.	SCC 12-55(b)(4)
The Fire Marshal or designee shall prohibit open burning when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous. The Fire Marshal may order extinguishment by the permit holder or fire department of any open burning which creates or adds to a hazardous situation or any that has been left unattended.	SCC 12-52(h) VSFPC 307.3
Operational Requirements	Code Section
Burning shall be conducted at least <b>50 feet</b> from woodlands, structures or other combustible materials, not less than <b>1,000 feet</b> from occupied buildings, and at least <b>2,500 feet</b> from highways, air fields, schools and healthcare facilities.	SCC 12-54(c)
When burning is conducted in a special incineration device (aka trench burner, open pit incinerator or air curtain burner), the minimum distance from occupied buildings can be reduced to 300ft and the minimum distance from highways, air fields, schools and healthcare facilities reduced to 1,000 feet.	SCC 12-55(b)(3)
Material to be burned shall be limited to brush, stumps and other vegetative matter generated at the site. All pulpwood, saw logs and firewood shall be removed to minimize the amount of material that is burned.	SCC 12-55(b)(2)
Demolition or construction debris shall <b>not be burned</b> and fires shall not be fed between Friday 12:00PM and Monday 7:00AM.	SCC 12-55(b)(6)
Open burning shall be <b>constantly attended</b> by an approved, competent person at least 18 years old and until the fire is extinguished.	SCC 12-55(b)(4)

### "Special Incineration Device", "Trench Burner", "Open Pit Incinerator", "Air Curtain Burner"

- Trench walls shall be essentially vertical and the pit shall have the following dimensions: Length - No longer than blower manifold, Width - Eight (8) feet, Depth - at least ten (10) feet
- The primary purpose of the air curtain is to create a "burn chamber." The air curtain is like a lid covering the opening of the chamber. The particles of smoke rising on the hot gases of the fire are trapped under the air curtain. These smoke particles are then re-burned and their size is significantly reduced. With this reduced size, they can now escape through the air curtain and appear more like waves of heat than smoke. The result is a very clean burn.
- The fan housing and manifold shall be assembled and maintained so as to prevent air leakage and the nozzle alignment shall provide a curtain of air in a plane aimed approximately two (2) to three (3) feet below the top of the pit edge opposite the manifold.
- At all times that there is a fire in the pit, except for a twenty minute start-up period, the blower shall be run at a speed sufficient to create an air curtain of sufficient velocity to deflect combustion gases downward into the pit.
- At no time shall the pit be filled in such a manner that material to be burned is above the level of the air curtain. Material shall remain at least three (3) feet below the air curtain.
- Prior to removing ashes from the pit, they shall first be soaked with water. No fires or burning embers are allowed outside the pit. Ashes removed from the pit shall be disposed of in such a manner as to prevent their becoming airborne.

