

Guide to Burning

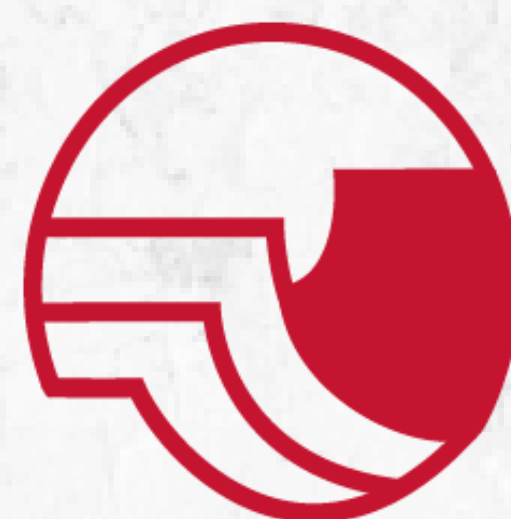
in Mesa County



Read through this guide to apply for your Open Burn Permit!

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**MESA COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**
Working Together for a Healthy Community

Why is burning regulated?

1

To protect the health of our residents

2

To reduce pollution in Mesa County

What permits are offered?

1 Agricultural Burn Permit

- No fee.
- Valid for a calendar year.
- Registering for this permit gives your local fire department a heads up that you'll be burning and is combined with fire safety regulations.

2 Residential Burn Permit

- Residential permits cost \$25, and the money supports your local fire district.
- This permit is valid for both Spring and Fall Open Burn Seasons in a calendar year.
- Properties must be at least one acre in size to open burn. Properties smaller than one acre may burn to maintain irrigation ditch/lateral only.
- Daily limits for open burning are 10 acres per day for non-pile burning and less than 250 cubic feet per day for pile burning.
- Piles should be at least 300 feet apart, otherwise, they are considered one pile for burning.
- Piles should be 50 feet from any structures (including combustible fences).
- The permit outlines expectations and possible violation investigation and enforcement to protect the health and safety of Mesa County residents.

3 City of Grand Junction

- City residents can apply for a burn permit through Mesa County Public Health.
- The burn season within City limits is one month shorter for spring and fall.

Spring Open Burn Season: March 1 - April 30
Fall Open Burn Season: Sept. 1 - Sept. 30

When can I burn?

1. Agricultural Burn Permits allow burning year-round.
2. Residential Burn Permits allow burning only during the designated burn seasons.

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| | <u>Mesa County</u> | <u>City of Grand Junction</u> |
| Spring Season | March 1 - May 31 | March 1 - April 30 |
| Fall Season | Sept. 1 - Oct. 31 | Sept. 1 - Sept. 30 |

3. Burns must take place one hour after sunrise and must be completely extinguished one hour before sunset.

4. All burns are prohibited during a No Burn Advisory or other open burn ban. It is your responsibility to check current air quality and fire safety conditions. Check current air quality conditions at health.mesacounty.us.

Residents above 6,000 feet elevation are exempt from the seasonal restrictions but should notify the local fire department prior to burning.

What can I burn?

- ✓ Agricultural Burns - materials related to the agricultural process
 - Cover vegetation to prepare the land for crop production
 - Orchard trimmings
 - Weeds
 - Maintenance of irrigation ditches
- ✓ Residential Burns
 - Dry weeds
 - Dry garden waste
 - Clean, dry tree, shrub or brush trimmings less than one inch in diameter

What can't I burn?

- ✗ Aerosol cans
- ✗ Hazardous or toxic materials
- ✗ Motor oil
- ✗ Trash
- ✗ Chemicals
- ✗ Insulation
- ✗ Plastic
- ✗ Treated wood or pallets
- ✗ Commercial landscaping waste
- ✗ Leaf and grass clippings*
- ✗ Tires
- ✗ Tree stumps
- ✗ Construction debris/lumber

*In the City of Grand Junction, a small pile of leaves, no more than 3 cubic feet, is allowed.

Burning in a barrel is PROHIBITED at all times

Why are Open Burn Bans Issued?

To ensure burning happens on appropriate days.

⊘ Weather

- Red Flag Warnings
- Fire Weather Watch
- High wind or dry conditions

⊘ Air Quality

- Air Watch Alerts
- Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment Air Quality Action Days

⊘ Public Safety

- Mesa County Sheriff's Office Burn Bans

How do I get a permit?

1

The easiest way to get a burn permit is to apply online at health.mesacounty.us

Residents who need assistance using the online system or don't have access to a computer or an internet connection can still apply for an Open Burn Permit in person at Mesa County Public Health, 510 29 ½ Road in Grand Junction, or call 970-248-6900.

2

Carefully read the conditions of the permit and agree to follow the rules for Open Burning.

3

Print a copy of your permit and ensure it's available on site at the time of the burn.

4

Follow the instructions on the permit when you burn, including notifying your local fire department when you plan to burn.

Alternatives to Burning

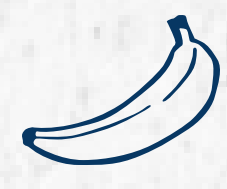
Composting

All composting requires 3 basic ingredients.



Tree Waste

- Dead leaves
- Branches
- Twigs
- ▶ Provides carbon



Yard/Household Waste

- Grass clippings
- Vegetable waste
- Fruit scraps
- Coffee grounds
- ▶ Provides nitrogen



Water

- ▶ Provides moisture to help break down organic matter.
- ▶ Adequate water is key to the process.

Your compost pile should have an equal amount of tree waste to yard/household waste and be about half water.

Alternate layers of organic materials of different-sized particles.

Tip

Bring your composting materials to the Mesa County Organic Material Composting Facility which utilizes specialized heavy equipment and a granular Nitrogen source called Urea to speed up the natural process and produce uniform, high quality products.

Tilling

You can use a tiller or cultivator to mix and blend the waste into your garden or lawn.

Be sure to:

- Remove rocks and large debris from the area.
- Check the ground for moisture, it shouldn't be muddy or too dry.
- Use an electrically powered machine to reduce emissions, if possible.

Other Options



Planting cover crops or rotating crops can help reduce weeds.



Restorative Land Management

- Putting animals on property only for crops.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) might be able to connect you to livestock.