



Harker Heights Fire and Rescue – Office of the Fire Marshal

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RECREATIONAL FIRES AND PORTABLE OUTDOOR FIRE PLACES

Open burning without a permit is strictly prohibited by the Fire Code.¹

There are certain permissible situations in which residents may have a recreational fire, utilize a portable outdoor fire place, or permanent outdoor fire place. It is important to understand the acceptable conditions that allow burning in an approved method.

Prohibited Acts:

A person shall not kindle or maintain, or authorize to be kindled or maintained any open burning unless conducted and approved in accordance with the currently adopted Fire Code.

Open burning that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous shall be prohibited.

Exception: Prescribed burning for the purpose of reducing the impact of wildfire when authorized by the Fire Code Official.

A permit must be obtained from the Fire Code Official prior to kindling a fire for recognized agricultural or range or wildlife management practices, property development, prevention or control of disease or pests, or open burning. Only the owner of the land may submit an application for a permit. The Fire Department also follows the guidelines of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and enforces the laws of the State of Texas regarding open burning.

The Fire Code Official or his /her designee is authorized to order the extinguishment of a fire to a permit holder or any other person within the City of Harker Heights.

Recreational Fires:

A recreational fire is allowed without a permit in approved containers at single and multi-family residences depending on certain situations.

- The recreational fire must be limited to a maximum of three feet in diameter and two feet in height, and must be contained in a non-combustible chimney, outdoor fireplace, fire pit, or other method approved by the Fire Code Official.
- All openings in the container or fire pit are required to be covered with wire mesh or other screening materials that will prevent the passage of sparks or embers.
- A container or fire pit used for recreational purposes is not permitted to substitute for open burning applications. Also, the container or fire pit may not be used on any porch, deck, balcony, or other portion of a building. This includes any room, space, or under any building overhang.

Outdoor Fireplaces:

Portable outdoor fireplaces, non-combustible chimneys, outdoor fire pits, or other approved methods are allowed to be used accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and must not be operated within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material. These items may not be used on any porch, deck, balcony, or other portion of a building. This includes any room, space, or under any building overhang.

A permanent outdoor fireplace intended for recreational fire purposes must not be installed within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 15 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition. Allowances may be made if the permanent outdoor fireplace is constructed in accordance with the International Building Code.

Attendance:

Recreational fires and use of outdoor fireplaces, portable or permanent, shall be constantly attended until the fire is extinguished. A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher complying with Section 906 of the Fire Code with a minimum 4-A rating or other approved on-site fire-extinguishing equipment, such as dirt, sand, water barrel, garden hose or water truck, shall be immediately available.

ⁱ 2015 International Fire Code adopted with amendments to the City of Harker Heights Code of Ordinances.