

Dukes County Fire Chiefs Association

Fire Pit Recommendations

1. For clarity, a fire pit includes a permanent fire pit and a portable fire pit. Both of which are intended to contain and control outdoor wood fires and have some means of containing ash within the base of the pit. They must be constructed of steel, brick, or masonry.
2. Fire pits are considered cooking fires and cooking fires are fires ignited and maintained for the express purpose of cooking food for human consumption. Once the cooking is completed, the fire must be extinguished. If the fire department responds to a call about a fire and food is not being prepared, the fire shall be extinguished and a citation may be issued. The size of the fire must be appropriate for use as a cooking fire. It is always at the discretion of the fire officer to determine if the fire is intended for cooking.
3. Portable fire pits constructed of steel, brick, or masonry shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and safety guidelines. In addition, they must be placed upon a non-combustible surface.
4. Only natural seasoned fire wood or commercial logs may be burned in a fire pit.
5. The fire in the fire pit shall be kept manageable.
6. The use of the fire pit must be attended and supervised by a competent adult until the fire has been completely extinguished.
7. A portable, ten (10) pound ABC or larger type of fire extinguisher or other approved extinguishing equipment, such as a garden hose or bucket of sand, must be readily available.
8. The use of a fire pit which creates a hazardous or objectionable condition shall be prohibited. A fire official is authorized to order the extinguishment of a fire in a fire pit creating a hazardous or objectionable condition. (As per MGL 148.5).
9. The fire pit should not be located within 15 feet of a structure or any combustible material. The pit must have a screen or spark arrestor to control embers and sparks. In no case shall the appliance be located directly under overhead combustible material.
10. The use of the fire pit shall not cause a building fire alarm system to be activated.
11. The fire's total fuel area (the amount of wood being burned at any given time) should not exceed more than three feet in diameter and no higher than two feet.
12. A person should not maintain any outdoor burning from midnight to seven am.
13. Guidelines when using fire pits shall include common sense, respect for neighbors and neighborhoods.

The above recommendations have been reviewed and approved by the Dukes County Fire Chief's Association.