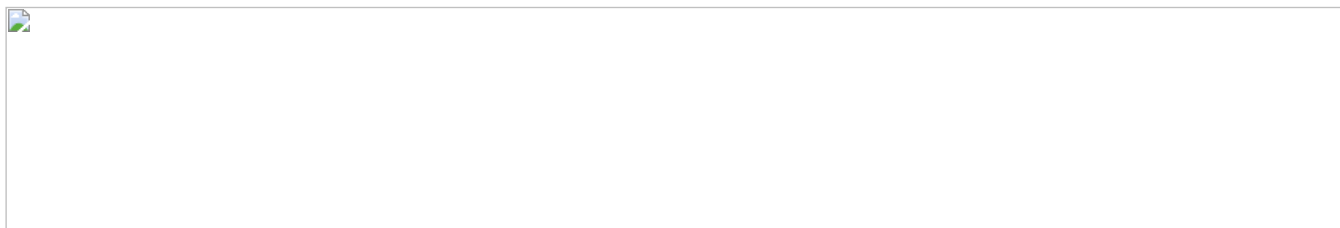


## NDEE News

For more information,  
contact NDEE's Public Information Office, (402) 471-4223 or (402) 471-4243



### All About NDEE: Community Burn Sites

Burning can be a convenient way to remove overgrown brush or fallen tree limbs from a property, especially in the wake of late-summer and early-fall storms that can often pop up across Nebraska.

Open fires, though, are prohibited by [Nebraska state law](#) as a means to protect air quality and the health and well-being of Nebraska residents.

While open fires are prohibited statewide, the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) may issue a written permit on a case-by-case basis for some open-fire exceptions, which are regulated under [Title 129-Nebraska Air Quality Regulations](#). One of the most notable exceptions is for community burn sites.

Even if a community burn site is permitted by NDEE, a second permit issued by the local fire authority is required for each burning event. In some communities, however, local ordinances prohibit community burn sites and offer wood chipping programs as a substitute.

If local ordinances allow community burn sites, NDEE only permits the burning of tree branches, brush, and untreated wood. NDEE also evaluates the burn pile location and the distance from the nearest downwind roadway or occupied structure.

Items such as leaves, grass clippings, creosoted wood, treated lumber, painted wood, building demolition materials, and tires cannot be burned.

Burning of prohibited materials at a community burn site may result in withdrawal of the permit, and it also changes disposal requirements for the remnant ash. Under [Title 132-Integrated Solid Waste Management Regulations](#), ash produced from any material other than untreated wood, branches, or brush is required to be disposed of at a landfill.

NDEE performs regular inspections of community burn sites to ensure compliance with Title 129.

Provided they do not create a nuisance or hazard, fires set solely as part of a religious activity, small fires for recreational purposes, and fires used in outdoor cooking devices are not regulated as open fires by NDEE.

NDEE also does not regulate the use of burn barrels for the destruction of household refuse on residential premises containing ten or less dwelling units. Many communities, however, have local ordinances that prohibit this practice.

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