

1st READING
TOWN OF BRISTOL
PROPOSED ORDINANCE
No. 2026-12

AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT TO
CHAPTER 12
OF THE ORDINANCES OF THE BRISTOL TOWN CODE

IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED by the Town Council of Bristol, Rhode Island, that Chapter 12 of the Ordinances of the Town of Bristol be amended as follows:

CHAPTER 12 – FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

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ARTICLE I. - IN GENERAL

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§ 12-1. Outdoor fires prohibited; exceptions.

No person shall kindle, maintain, or permit any outdoor fire within the Town of Bristol except as expressly authorized by this article, the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, as amended, or other applicable state law. Any outdoor fire not expressly authorized by this article, the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, as amended, or other applicable state law shall constitute a violation of the Bristol Code.

§ 12-2. Recreational and cooking fires.

- A. The conduct of recreational fires and cooking fires shall be in accordance with the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, as amended, and the most current edition thereof adopted by law, and shall comply with the requirements of this section.
- B. No permit shall be required for cooking fires or recreational fires, provided that such fires comply with this article, the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, and all other applicable laws and regulations.
- C. For purposes of this section, a recreational fire means the noncommercial burning of materials other than rubbish for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, cooking, or similar purposes in which the fuel burned is not contained in an incinerator, barbecue grill, or barbecue pit, and the total fuel area does not exceed three (3) feet (0.9 m) in diameter and two (2) feet (0.6 m) in height.
- D. Recreational and cooking fires shall only be conducted between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

E. Recreational fires shall use only clean, seasoned firewood or commercially available fire logs, or shall be gas-fired and used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

F. No person shall burn construction debris, pallets, trash, rubbish, furniture, vegetation, yard waste, painted wood, treated lumber, pressure-treated wood, plastics, rubber, hazardous substances or materials, or any other material not expressly authorized by this article.

G. Recreational fires shall not exceed three (3) feet in diameter or two (2) feet in height.

H. Recreational fires shall not be located within twenty-five (25) feet of a structure or combustible material unless contained in an approved manner. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread to within twenty-five (25) feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition. All fires shall be located in a manner that does not create a hazard to adjacent property, structures, or persons.

I. Open, recreational, and cooking fires shall be constantly attended by a competent person until the fire is fully extinguished.

J. A garden hose connected to a water supply or other approved fire-extinguishing equipment shall be readily available for use at all times while an open, recreational, or cooking fire is burning.

§ 12-3. Permitted burning for land clearing and yard waste.

A. The Fire Department may issue permits for land clearing or yard waste burning at its discretion and subject to the requirements of this section and the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, as amended.

B. Permits shall specify:

(1) Location of burning;

(2) Name and address of permittee; and

(3) Authorized dates and times.

C. Permitted burning shall occur only between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Fire Department and permitted by applicable law.

D. Only brush and tree limbs originating from the permittee's property may be burned.

E. The following materials are strictly prohibited:

(1) Leaves;

- (2) Trash or rubbish;
- (3) Furniture;
- (4) Construction debris;
- (5) Tires;
- (6) Plastics or rubber; and
- (7) Hazardous substances or materials.

F. The maximum burn pile size shall be five (5) feet high by five (5) feet wide, with a maximum total area of twenty-five (25) square feet.

G. Minimum setbacks shall be:

- (1) One hundred (100) feet from any structure; and
- (2) One hundred (100) feet from any property line.

H. All permitted burning shall be continuously supervised by a competent adult, with adequate water or approved fire-extinguishing equipment immediately available.

I. The Fire Department may impose additional conditions on any permit issued under this section as necessary to protect public safety and prevent the spread of fire.

§ 12-4. Training fires.

Fires authorized by the Bristol Fire Department for training or other official departmental purposes are permitted and shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law and applicable provisions of the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, as amended.

§ 12-5. Restrictions; hazardous conditions.

- A. No outdoor burning of any kind shall be permitted during drought, high wind, or Red Flag Warning conditions.
- B. Outdoor fires shall not be built, ignited, or maintained in or upon areas designated as hazardous fire areas by the Fire Department or otherwise designated as hazardous fire areas pursuant to applicable law.
- C. The Fire Department shall be authorized to require any fire to be immediately discontinued if the fire or smoke generated by such fire is determined to constitute a hazardous condition or otherwise presents a danger to public safety.

D. The Fire Department may order any outdoor fire immediately extinguished if it determines that the fire violates this article, the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code, or any applicable permit condition, or that the fire or smoke generated by the fire creates a hazardous condition, nuisance, or danger to public safety.

§ 12-6. Use restrictions.

Permanent barbecues, portable barbecues, outdoor fireplaces, and grills shall not be used for the disposal of rubbish, trash, combustible waste material, or any other material prohibited by this article.

§ 12-7. Enforcement.

A. The Bristol Fire Department shall have primary enforcement authority over this article.

B. The Bristol Police Department is authorized to:

(1) Issue citations;

(2) Enforce civil fines; and

(3) Assist the Fire Department in enforcement as necessary.

C. Any permit issued under this article may be revoked immediately by the Fire Department if conditions become hazardous, permit conditions are violated, or smoke or fire creates a nuisance or danger to public safety.

§ 12-8. Penalties.

A. The penalty for a violation of any section of this article shall be up to the maximum penalty allowed by state law for municipalities to impose for ordinance violations.

B. Notwithstanding subsection A, the penalties for violations of this article shall be imposed as follows, to the extent permitted by state law:

(1) First offense. Following a previous response by the Fire Department and determination of non-compliance, the violator shall be issued an order to cease and desist the violation and may be assessed a fine of up to One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

(2) Second and subsequent offenses. A second offense and each subsequent offense shall be subject to an order to cease and desist the violation and a fine of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00).

C. Each day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

Secs. 12-~~19~~ – 12-30. – Reserved.

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This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage.