



Midlothian Fire Department – Fire Prevention Bureau

Stephen Hotwagner

Fire Chief

Michael Lonkar

Fire Prevention Officer

Frequently asked questions regarding Bonfire/recreational fires in Midlothian

1. What type of fire pit can I use? A commercially manufactured device specifically designed, intended, advertised and utilized for the purposes of recreational campfires, such as chimineas, outdoor fireplaces and/or covered outdoor firepits. Such container must be located above ground and in no event shall it be built into the ground or located below grade.



2. Do I need a spark arrester (screen) on my fire? Yes, you must be in control of any embers that are emitted during a fire. Do not burn on windy days. Only burn clean seasoned wood logs.
3. Does an adult need to be present to have an outside fire? Yes! Such fire shall be under the control of and attended at all times by a person eighteen (18) years of age or older who is not intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
4. What extinguishing measures must be taken to have an outside fire?
A portable fire extinguisher or other approved extinguishing agent such as sand, dirt or water in sufficient quantity shall be available for immediate use or water from a hose connected to an operational water source which hose shall have sufficient length and capacity to promptly extinguish the fire.
5. How much wood can I put in my fire pit? No more than ½ the capacity of the pit. Such fire shall at all times be safely managed and shall not be permitted to create excessive flames, flying cinders or smoke.
6. After I am done with my fire, can I let it burn out on its own? No!
The fire shall be properly extinguished and not permitted to smolder after substantial completion of combustion
7. How far must my fire pit be from my house, garage or shed?
Such fire shall be located in an area separated from any structure by not less than fifteen feet (15').



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8. Can I place my fire pit on the Village street or sidewalk? No!
No fire shall be permitted upon any public street, road, sidewalk or other public property

9. What if my neighbor complains about my fire? When having a recreational fire, you must be mindful of your neighborhood. Some people have medical issues and cannot tolerate excessive smoke or odors. If your fire is determined to be a nuisance, you will be required to extinguish it immediately. Such fire shall not be used in such a manner as to emit offensive or objectional smoke or odors or when other circumstances make such fires hazardous

10. What types of wood can I burn in my fire pit? APPROVED WOOD: Seasoned dry firewood of dimensions appropriate to safely fit within the approved container with any cover remaining attached.

11. What types of wood are illegal to burn? ANY: green or fresh vegetation materials; construction materials, such as treated woods, plywood or pressure treated wood, laminated beams or any other materials which produce excessive smoke, cinders or other emissions characteristic of non-seasoned wood.

12. What is considered a recreational fire? A safely conducted and controlled fire utilized for comfort, enjoyment or relaxation.

Our ordinance can be found at <https://www.villageofmidlothian.net/> Midlothian residents with questions and/or concerns about the provided or additional information may contact the Midlothian Fire Department at (708) 489-4742 and ask for the Fire Prevention Officer, Michael Lonkar.

Michael Lonkar

Fire Prevention Officer



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