

Campfire and burn permit update

In early June 2019, the Park County Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 19-01, the "Park County Open Fire and Open Burning Restriction Ordinance." Ordinance 19-01 includes requirements for obtaining an Open Burn Permit, clarifies and codifies Burn Ban Restrictions, Slash Burning restrictions, and provides for enforcement by the Park County sheriff's office including criminal prosecution and fines.

The following are key definitions and excerpts from Ordinance 19-01:

Hot Work. For purposes of this ordinance, "hot work" shall include cutting, welding, brazing, glass blowing, operating acetylene or other torch with an open flame, or other similar type of operation. Small engine operation without a spark arrestor, including chainsaws, ATVS and motorcycles.

Open Fire or Open Burning. For purposes of this ordinance, "open fire" or "open burning" shall be defined as any outdoor fire, including, but not limited to, campfires, bonfires, the use of explosives, outdoor welding or hot work, fireworks of all kinds or brands, and the prescribed burning of fence lines or rows, fields, rangelands, wildlands, trash, and debris.

Open fires shall not include:

- i. Fires in camp stoves or grills, fueled by bottled gas or pressurized liquid, and specifically designed for cooking or heating purposes;
- ii. Fires in permanently constructed stationary masonry or metal fireplaces specifically designed for the purpose of combustion;
- iii. Fires in commercially operated wood and/or charcoal fired grills designed for cooking.

Open Burn Permit Required. No person shall conduct open burning on private property within the unincorporated area of Park County without first having obtained an Open Burn Permit from the legally constituted Fire Protection District in which the property is located. Permits will be issued annually and will expire on December 31 of that year. The cost of the Open Burn Permit is Ten Dollars (\$10.00). All funds collected will be used by the Fire District having jurisdiction and having issued the permit.

All open burning is regulated in Park County by burn permit. These permits are renewed annually and are obtained through the Park County Fire Protection Districts. Persons with permits must call the Burn information line before any outside burning occurs. Residents are required to notify their local fire districts for a 3-foot x 3-foot x 3-foot campfire. Slash burning is only allowed October 1st to April 30th with a minimum of 2 inches of snow on the ground. Slash burning is prohibited from May 1st to September 30th regardless of the amount of snow on the ground. A slash burn must be called into the jurisdictional fire department or Fire District and approved. Slash is defined as vegetation, pine needles, clean untreated lumber and tree branches. No burning of trash is allowed in Park County.

Burn Ban Restrictions: The following acts are PROHIBITED on ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY during a declared Burn Ban:

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire, including charcoal.
2. Smoking except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.
3. Operating motorized vehicles off designated roads or trails.

4. Blasting, hot work or other activities, which generate flame or flammable material.
5. Fireworks and model rocketry.
6. Target and recreational shooting
7. Operating a chain saw without a 10lb ABC or 2 ½ gallon pressurized or equivalent fire extinguisher, and large size pointed shovel readily available for quick use.

The Ordinance also covers other similar burn information, including smoking within an enclosed vehicle, recreational shooting limitations, etc.

What does this mean for Indian Mountain Residents?

- Effective immediately, a Burn Permit is required for any activity that meets the definition above, including campfires. Burn Permit applications are available online at www.impoa.net or www.jcfd.org. The form needs to be filled out and taken to the JCFPD along with \$10 to obtain your burn permit number! Failure to Obtain a burn permit is subject to a \$50 fine (first offense) and increases up to \$150 for multiple offenses.
- On the day that a Resident wants to open burn or have a campfire, they are required to call the county burn ban line (719-836-4160) to determine if burning is allowed, as well as 'notify' JCFPD before any open burning, including campfires, and provide their burn permit number. See the JCFPD website for more information (or reference the information on your burn permit!)
- Residents should be aware of the restrictions that are in place during a burn ban. The penalty for ignoring a burn ban is a \$500 fine (first offense) and increases up to \$1,000 for multiple offenses.

This is a brand-new ordinance for Park County, and the various fire agencies are continuing to review it and sort how they will be implementing and enforcing the new law. IMPOA and IMMMD will continue to monitor the implementation of policies and procedures associated with Ordinance 19-01 and will provide updates for significant changes. Members are also encouraged to attend monthly board meetings to obtain further information on this matter, as well as other matters that impact the community.