



*Fire Department
3326 Tower Avenue
Superior, Wisconsin, 54880*

*(715) 394-0227
Fax (715) 394-0215
TDD (715) 394-0251*

Campfires & Outdoor Fireplaces

Outdoor fires are an enjoyable part of life in the Northland. When proper care is not taken, they may also be dangerous to life and property. In addition, there are several state statutes which govern the kindling of outdoor fires.

What Is the Difference Between a Campfire And a Bonfire?

The generally accepted rule of thumb is that a campfire is a small outdoor fire limited to three feet in diameter. A bonfire is any outdoor fire larger than three feet in diameter.

What Is an Outdoor Fireplace?

An outdoor fireplace is a structure either commercially manufactured or homemade for the purpose of containing an outdoor fire. It may be either a permanent structure or may be portable. Outdoor fireplaces are marketed under a variety of brand names and are constructed of a variety of materials.

Am I Required to Obtain a Burning Permit?

Burning permits are not required for the use of outdoor fireplaces nor for the kindling of campfires. For any other type of outdoor burning, a permit must be obtained from the Superior Fire Department. To obtain a permit, contact the Battalion Chief on duty at 394-0227.

When Is Outdoor Burning Permitted?

The kindling of a campfire or the use of an outdoor fireplace is permitted anytime during the day, seven days a week. With the exception of bonfires, any other permit required outdoor burning must take place during daylight hours.

What If My Neighbor Objects to My Fire?

The Fire Department will respond to such objections and use their best judgment concerning the extinguishment of a campfire. Considerations shall include wind direction, smoke generated, materials being burned and safety.

When Is Outdoor Burning Not Permitted?

Outdoor burning is not permitted when weather conditions (as determined by the Fire Chief) are adverse to burning. This may include days when there are high winds or when ground cover is dry. It may also include days when a thermal inversion would cause the smoke from your fire to hang near the ground. If you have a question about whether a burning ban exists for a particular

day, please contact the Superior Fire Department.

Where Is Outdoor Burning Permitted?

Campfires and outdoor fireplaces may not be placed within 15 feet of any structure or of any combustibles. This would include things like buildings, shrubs, trees and the outdoor storage of combustibles. Outdoor fireplaces may not be used on wooden decks or porches.

What May I Burn in My Campfire or Outdoor Fireplace?

You may burn dry wood only. The wood may be either natural wood such as sticks and logs or clean, untreated dimensional lumber such as pallet material or two-by-fours. You may not burn any household trash, garbage or refuse. You may not burn paper or cardboard except that a small amount of paper or cardboard may be used to start the fire but may not be used to fuel the fire. You may not burn leaves or other yard waste. You may burn wooden construction debris as long as it does not have a coating such as paint or varnish on it and as long as it is not treated such as is the case with so called "green treated lumber." Your fire must be ignited without the use of any combustible or flammable liquid such as gasoline, diesel or oil.

What Safety Precautions Should I Take When Burning?

Campfires should only be kindled on bare earth. A method for extinguishment should be close at hand. State statutes require that any outdoor burning be constantly attended by a competent adult. The statute also requires that the person attending the fire be equipped with a garden hose attached to a water supply or other fire extinguishing equipment. Before leaving the fire, it should be extinguished completely. It should be doused with water sufficiently that you can place your hand in the ashes.

**If you have any questions regarding
campfires or outdoor fireplaces,
personnel from
the Superior Fire Department
are available to assist you.**