

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Open Burning of Yard Debris

Due to the enormous amount of debris generated from Sunday's wind storm, many residents are left with overwhelming amounts of material to clean up. The Regional Air Pollution Control Agency (RAPCA) would like to remind residents that open burning for the purpose of waste disposal is prohibited within all city limits and many areas beyond.

The Ohio open burning rules prohibit the burning of garbage in all areas and the burning of brush and yard waste within "restricted areas". By definition, a restricted area is any area located within the boundary of any municipal corporation, plus a zone extending one thousand feet beyond the boundaries of any such municipal corporation having a population of one thousand to ten thousand persons and a zone extending one mile beyond any such municipal corporation having a population of ten thousand persons or more. Unrestricted areas are all areas located outside the boundaries of restricted areas.

Residents living in "unrestricted areas" may be permitted to burn yard waste originating on the premises, but they must meet several criteria specified in the state regulations. Specifically, the regulations contain the following stipulations:

- 1) The burn site must be located at least 1,000 feet (approximately 3 football fields) from the nearest inhabited building not on the premises.
- 2) The wastes must be stacked and dried to provide the conditions for efficient burning (i.e. green tree limbs do not meet this criterion);
- 3) The fire may only be set when atmospheric conditions will readily dissipate contaminants;
- 4) The fire must not create a visibility hazard on roadways, railroad tracks or air fields; and
- 5) No products may be burned which contain rubber, grease, asphalt or liquid petroleum products.

Many communities are offering curb side pick-up services and drop-off sites to help residents clean up their properties. RAPCA is urging all residents to refrain from burning and contact their local government entity to find out what options are available.

Open burning can cause breathing difficulties, especially for those suffering from asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, allergies and other respiratory problems. Fire departments are also concerned about open burning because dry conditions can make it easy for fires to accidentally spread and cause damage to neighboring structures.

RAPCA also cautions that 'recreational' fires and cooking fires are not intended for waste disposal purposes and are only allowed to contain clean, dry, seasoned firewood, which burns hotter and cleaner than green brush and yard waste.

For more information on Ohio's Open Burning Regulations, please visit www.rapca.org or contact RAPCA at (937) 225-4435.

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