



Burn Ban Frequently Asked Questions

What is a burn ban?

A burn ban is a legal restriction on outdoor burning, implemented during dry weather conditions that increase fire risk, to ensure public safety and environmental protection.

Who can legally put a burn ban in place?

Local elected officials have the authority to impose burn bans. In Talbot County, the Burn Ban Committee meets and makes a recommendation to the County Council, then the Council can pass an administrative resolution enacting a burn ban.

Code reference: [§119-6](#)

Why are burn bans needed?

Burn bans help mitigate the risk of uncontrolled fires, which can destroy homes, agricultural fields, personal property, and endanger lives. Fire smoke is also a significant air pollutant, with potential short- and long-term health impacts.

When do burn bans go into effect?

Burn bans can be enacted in any season but are most common during summer season, which varies by location. Talbot County has enacted bans most recently in June and July.

What happens if I violate a burn ban?

During a burn ban, public officers have permission to enter a public or private property to extinguish a fire, and may confiscate any unused fireworks, sparklers, or sparking devices.

Residents are urged to comply with the burn ban to ensure public safety, conserve firefighting resources, and protect property from the increased risk of fire. Non-compliance may result in enforcement actions by designated public officers.

Are backyard fire pits banned?

Yes, backyard fire pits are prohibited during a burn ban.

Can gas grills or outdoor stoves be used during a burn ban?

Yes, gas grills and propane stoves are permitted during a burn ban.

Are fireworks prohibited during a burn ban?

Yes, fireworks are banned, with the exception of commercial fireworks conducted by a licensed professional.

Is smoking banned during a burn ban?

No, smoking is not banned, but it is crucial to extinguish cigarettes carefully and dispose of them safely in a trash bin.

How do I find out if there is a burn ban?

Visit the [Talbot County Website](#), Talbot County [Department of Emergency Services Website](#), or their Facebook Pages.

Does the burn ban have an expiration date?

Yes, burn bans go into effect for a specific period, usually 30 days from enactment. It can be extended or suspended by a subsequent resolution.