



PRESS RELEASE

HARRIS COUNTY TEXAS

DATE: December 20, 2011 / 1:00 p.m.

Commissioners Court Amends Burn Ban

On Tuesday December 20, Commissioners Court amended the county burn ban to remove all limitations on legal outdoor burning except large ceremonial fires and the burning of certain domestic waste at night.

Effective December 21, residents without regularly scheduled trash pick-up will be allowed to burn "domestic waste" during daylight hours. Small ceremonial or recreational fires are also allowed with Fire Marshal approval.

Regardless of type, outdoor burning must not create a nuisance or traffic hazard. "Any smoke or odor from a fire cannot be allowed to cause a nuisance to your neighbors," says Harris County Pollution Control Services Director Bob Allen. "Additionally, the smoke may not cross a road and cause a traffic hazard or interfere with normal road use."

"Lifting the burn ban does not automatically apply to fires or smoking in county parks," says Fire Marshal Mike Montgomery. "The final decision to allow cooking or fires in designated areas of a county park is up to each County Commissioner."

The Harris County Fire Marshal's Office reminds you that if you conduct an outside burn you must:

- Only burn domestic waste, tree limbs, grass clippings and leaves. No building materials, large brush piles, or other debris.
- Check the weather forecast—**DO NOT burn** on "fire weather watch" or "red flag warning" days
- Stay with the fire at all times while it is burning.
- Burn only from sun-up to sun-down—no burning at night.
- Have water available to extinguish the fire.
- Consider your neighbors when burning.
- Be extremely careful.

Outdoor burning can be dangerous. On Sunday, a trash fire claimed the life of an elderly male in east Harris County. "This tragic death indicates why we recommend other means of disposal, such as trash collection or hauling refuse to an authorized waste disposal site," said Fire Marshal Mike Montgomery.

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