

**\*\* NOTICE \*\***

**COUNTYWIDE BURNING ORDINANCE  
Effective May 1, 2004**

The Gloucester County Fire Protection Ordinance (Gloucester County Code, Chapter 8, Articles I, II, III, IV, and V) revisions become effective May 1, 2004. Copies of the Ordinance are available at the Office of Codes Compliance, at 6582 Main Street, and also on-line at [www.gloucesterva.info](http://www.gloucesterva.info). The following information is intended to familiarize the general public with the revisions concerning burning of debris wastes.

The Code defines 'debris waste' as stumps, wood, brush and leaves from on-site land clearing operations [and maintenance]. Burning of this material is both **permissible** and **permissible** by following 'guidelines' as set forth in the Ordinance. Burning of miscellaneous substances is generally prohibited and includes, but is not limited to; rubber tires, garbage, asphalt shingles and building demolition wastes, etc.

It should be noted that **campfires, ceremonial fires, outdoor food cooking, and warming fires for outdoor workers** (generally in a barrel or drum) are not affected by the Ordinance and remain permissible **without any County permitting**. As long as these activities do not constitute a nuisance, they are legal. Speaking of debris waste burning and residential yard maintenance, it is also generally permissible (no permit needed) to burn leaves, branches and limbs within the guidelines that follow.

**Residential Yard Waste**

Leaves, tree, yard and garden trimmings that result from **maintenance of the property**, can be burned on the premises **without a permit within the following guidelines**:

- If the **burn pile is 3 feet or less high** (tall) and less than 10 feet by 10 feet on the ground, it must be a minimum of **100 feet** away from any adjacent **occupied building (including homes)**, and a minimum of **50 feet** away from **any structure** (including sheds, garages, and the home on the premises).
- If the **burn pile is between 3 feet and 10 feet high** (tall), and less than 10 feet by 10 feet on the ground, it must be a minimum of **150 feet** away from any adjacent **occupied building (including homes)**, and provision made to keep the fire from spreading to within **50 feet** of any **structure**.

Be advised that **no burn pile can be taller than 10 feet**, nor larger than 10 feet by 10 feet (100 square feet) on the ground, **without a permit from the County**. Also, the burning shall be conducted when the wind is not blowing right to your neighbor's house, so please exercise common sense and decency in regards to neighborly relations.

Additionally, the revisions now specifically **prohibit burning debris wastes in ditches, drainways, and public rights-of-way**. **If you cannot establish a burn area that meets the minimum separation distances and guidelines, you should take your yard refuse to one of the County transfer/recycling areas nearest you.**

**Continued on the back**

**PLEASE NOTE!!!** As in any open burning, the **fire must be constantly attended until it is extinguished** with provisions such as water hoses, sand, dirt, or fire extinguishers (minimum of 1-4A rated; or 2-2A rated extinguishers) available at the burn site in sufficient quantities to extinguish the fire.

Be further advised that **violations** of the above are a **Class 3 misdemeanor**, punishable by a fine up to \$500.

### **Commercial Land Clearing Waste**

Limbs, trees, stumps and vegetation from land clearing for subdivisions and commercial sites can only be burned by **permit**. Please contact this office at (804) 693-4040 to schedule the necessary site visit and to pick-up a permit application. All permitted burning must be 300-feet from any occupied dwelling other than the building located on the property on which the burning is conducted.

Be advised that **violations** of the Burning Ordinance **that require a permit** are a **Class 1 misdemeanor**, punishable by a fine up to \$2,500, confinement in jail for not more than twelve months; either or both.

For general questions, or to report complaints, please call the Office of Codes Compliance at (804) 693-4040 during normal business hours. After hours and on weekends, please call (804) 693-7037.

**To report fires threatening lives or property, call 911.**