Safe Burning

Burn responsibly...or don’t burn at all!

Debris burning is the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin. Using fire as a method to dispose of vegetative yard waste isn’t the only option. While debris burning is legal in most places, let’s face it...it’s unsafe, unhealthy and a nuisance. If you choose to burn, follow these simple guidelines to ensure you are burning SAFELY:

**BEFORE BURNING**

- Find alternatives to burning debris before deciding to burn
- Obtain proper burn permits and follow any restrictions
- Comply with local ordinances that may be more restrictive than state law
- Make certain you are only burning legal materials *(turn over for a complete list)*
- Keep an eye on the weather and avoid burning under windy conditions
- Make certain the area adjacent to the fire is free of all flammables

**DURING BURNING**

- Have a water source and firefighting tools handy
- Keep the size of the fire small and manageable
- Maintain a mineral soil firebreak around the burn area
- Never leave your fire unattended
- If weather conditions change for the worst, put the fire out
- If your fire escapes, dial 911 immediately!

**AFTER BURNING**

- Make sure the burn is completely out before leaving
- Use lots of water, drown, stir and repeat until cold
- Go back and check again later for any remaining smoke or embers
- Fun fact: use cold ashes from your burn as a bed for your garden. It makes a great fertilizer!

For a DNR burn permit or to check today’s burning restrictions:

[dnr.wi.gov](dnr.wi.gov) *(keyword “fire”)*

[1-888-wis-burn](tel:1-888-wis-burn) *(947-2876)*
REUSE - Find someone else who can use it, have a yard sale or donate. Bring reusable shopping bags to the grocery store. Leave grass clippings on the lawn; they contain nutrients.

RECYCLE - Separate newspaper, magazines, cardboard, paper, glass, plastic and aluminum, steel or tin cans.

DISPOSE - Discard non-recyclable waste materials at a licensed landfill.

COMPOST - Mulch or collect leaves and plant clippings for composting or move brush piles in the woods for wildlife habitat.

CHIP - Collect brush and clean wood to make mulch or decorative chips, or use as heating fuel in fireplaces.

WAIT - Avoid burning in the spring. The safest time to burn is when the ground is completely snow-covered. Throw a tarp over legal materials and wait until it snows.

For a DNR burn permit or to check today’s burning restrictions:

dnr.wi.gov (keyword “fire”)

1-888-wis-burn (947-2876)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is an equal opportunity employer. Alternative format is available upon request. Please call (608) 267-7494 for more information.