

Open Fire Pits

Methuen Fire Department's policy concerning the use of "Open Fire Pits" is this:

There is no type of special permit required for the use of outdoor fire pits on private property.

However, there are some simple rules to follow.

1. Keep the fire small and manageable (less than 3' in diameter).
2. Never use wet, damp, or "new" wood. This creates needless, irritating smoke. Always use dry, seasoned wood, charcoal, or specialist fuel (e.g. wood burning briquettes).
3. Do not cause a nuisance to neighbors.
4. If Methuen Fire Department receives complaints from neighbors that the smoke or smell is bothersome to them, we will investigate, and if deemed necessary, you may be instructed to extinguish, or allow it to burn out.
5. The fire pit should be sited on a flat surface that is non-combustible. An area should be cleared around it 15' in all directions of all vegetation and combustibles.
6. If using a manufactured fire pit, it is to be placed on a flat and level surface. The fire pit should not wobble at all.
7. If assembly is required, be sure to read the assembly instructions carefully and attach any fastenings securely.
8. Do not leave the fire unattended. It could pose a hazard to both children and pets. Note - it is possible to buy a safety guard.
9. Make sure that the fire pit is placed away from other materials that could burn or catch fire, both overhead and to the side, such as tree branches, sheds, awnings, clothes lines, fences and plants.
10. Use long barbecue tongs to handle wood or food to lessen the risk of burning yourself. A pair of fire gloves would also be useful - the sides of cast iron fire pits in particular get very hot.
11. Never use a manufactured fire pit indoors.
12. It is advisable to keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose handy, for quick extinguishment if necessary.
13. Never use an accelerant to light any fire. There have been cases of people burning themselves while trying to light a fire with a "small amount" of gasoline. The fire will "flash back" on the person, and can cause severe burns, and possibly death.
14. You should call Methuen Fire Department prior to lighting your outdoor fire at 978-983-8940 so we are aware that you are conducting outdoor burning.