

Guidelines for Open Burning Wood Waste and Vegetation Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Division of Air Pollution Control

In Tennessee, the rules for burning wood waste and vegetation are different but both can be burned under certain conditions. These conditions are explained here and apply even if you have a burn permit issued by the Division of Forestry or any other local agency. Remember, plant life such as leaves, evergreen needles, and grasses, are not considered “wood waste.” Manufactured lumber products, such as plywood, fiberboard, particleboard, and paneling, painted or artificially stained wood, and chemically treated lumber are not considered “wood waste.” Paper and cardboard are not considered “wood waste.”

Wood waste and other vegetation may be used as fuel for cooking of food or for ceremonial, recreational, or comfort-heating purposes, including barbecues, campfires, and outdoor fireplaces. However, open burning for other purposes is often subject to certain restrictions:

Restrictions for open burning wood waste

The following rules apply to wood waste burned for disposal purposes within 200 feet of an occupied building (including homes):

- At least 1 person shall be constantly present at the burning.
- No more than 2 burns in a 30 day period.
- Each burn cannot last longer than 48 hours.
- Burning within 100 feet of an occupied building (including homes) may only occur if an adult occupant of the building gives written permission.

Restrictions for open burning vegetation

Burning vegetation grown on the property of the burn site is acceptable. However, the following rules apply for disposal of vegetation by burning (other than wood) not grown on the property of the burn site:

- Burning cannot be within 1/2 mile of an airport, hospital, nursing home, school, Federal or State highway, national reservation, national or state park, wildlife area, national or state forest, and/or occupied structures (including homes) located on another property.
- The person responsible for such burning must certify the distance requirements in writing at least 10 working days prior to burning. Call 1-888-891-TDEC for details.

Remember, if you are burning wood waste and vegetation together, the restrictions for both apply.

Got questions about outdoor burning?

Call TDEC at 1-888-891-TDEC or visit <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/apc-air-pollution-control-home/apc/open-burning.html>.

Revised July 24, 2018

Amended Portion of Tennessee Air Quality Act Concerning Wood Waste Open Burning

From: <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/tncode/>

Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-115 (2016)

68-201-115. Local pollution control programs -- Exemption from state supervision -- Applicability of part to air contaminant sources burning wood waste -- Open burning of wood waste.

(c) (1) All new certificates of exemption shall be for a fixed term not to exceed two (2) years. This part does not apply to emissions from any air contaminant source, as defined in this part, which burns wood waste solely for the disposition of such wood waste; provided, however, that open burning of wood waste within two hundred feet (200') of an occupied building by any person other than an occupant of the building shall only be conducted as follows:

- (A) At least one (1) person shall be constantly present at the burning during the entire time of the burn;
- (B) Each burn shall not exceed forty-eight (48) hours in duration;
- (C) Burning shall not occur more than twice in any thirty-day period; and
- (D) If the burning occurs within one hundred feet (100') of an occupied building, it may only occur if an adult occupant of the building gives written authorization for the burn to occur and has not rescinded the authorization in writing.

(2) Provided further, however, that, if a local government has enacted or enacts more stringent requirements concerning such open burning of wood waste, those provisions shall control over the requirements of this subsection (c).

[Acts 1967, ch. 367, § 15; 1971, ch. 266, § 1; 1971, ch. 365, §§ 1, 2; 1972, ch. 787, § 1; 1973, ch. 325, §§ 4, 6; 1974, ch. 598, § 1; 1975, ch. 359, § 1; 1977, ch. 116, § 1; 1977, ch. 169, § 2; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 22, 36; Acts 1979, ch. 299, § 7; 1981, ch. 131, § 29; T.C.A., § 53-3422; Acts 1984, ch. 788, § 12; T.C.A., § 68-25-115; Acts 1994, ch. 658, §§ 1-3; 2007, ch. 559, § 1; 2013, ch. 156, § 1.]