

**RULES  
OF  
TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION  
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT  
DIVISION OF AIR POLLUTION CONTROL**

**CHAPTER 1200-3-4  
OPEN BURNING**

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**1200-3-4-.01 PURPOSE**

It is the purpose of this chapter to establish controls on open burning so as to prevent undesirable levels of air contaminants in the atmosphere.

*Authority:* T.C.A. §§68-25-105 and 4-5-202. *Administrative History:* Original rule certified June 7, 1974. Amendment filed January 10, 1977; effective February 9, 1977. Amendment filed September 21, 1988; effective November 6, 1988.

**1200-3-4-.02 DEFINITIONS.**

- (1) As used in this Rule Chapter, all terms not defined herein shall have the meaning given them in Rule Chapter 1200-3-2.
  - (a) Repealed.
  - (b) “Air Pollution Emergency Episode” is defined as air pollution alerts, warnings, or emergencies declared by the Tennessee Division of Air Pollution Control during adverse air dispersion conditions that may result in harm to public health or welfare.
  - (c) “Natural Disaster” is defined as any event commonly referred to as an “Act of God” and includes but is not limited to the following weather - related or naturally - occurring categories of events: tornadoes, hail and wind storms, snow or ice storms, flooding, and earthquakes.
  - (d) “Open Burning” is the burning of any matter under such conditions that products of combustion are emitted directly into the open atmosphere without passing directly through a stack. Open burning includes, but is not limited to, fires located or burning in a pile on the ground, a barrel, a fire pit, or other semi-enclosure. The use of an air curtain destructor or air curtain incinerator is considered incineration subject to the permitting requirements of Rule Chapter 1200-3-9, and is explicitly not considered open burning.
  - (e) “Person” is any individual, partnership, co-partnership, firm, company, corporation, association, joint stock company, trust, estate, political subdivision, an agency, authority, commission, or department of the United States government, or of the State of Tennessee government; or any other legal entity, or their legal representative, agent, or assigns.
  - (f) Repealed.
  - (g) “Wood Waste” is defined as any product which has not lost its basic character as wood, such as bark, sawdust, chips and chemically untreated lumber whose “disposition” by open burning is to solely get rid of or destroy. Plant life of a herbaceous nature, such as leaves, whether attached,

(Rule 1200-3-4-.02, continued)

fallen, and/or collected, evergreen needles, and grasses, are not considered “wood waste”. Additionally, manufactured lumber products, such as plywood, fiberboard, particleboard, and paneling, are not considered “wood waste”. Painted or artificially stained wood is not considered “wood waste”.

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 4-5-202, 68-201-101 et seq., and 68-25-105. **Administrative History:** Original rule certified June 7, 1974. Amendment filed January 10, 1977; effective February 9, 1977. Amendment filed February 5, 1979; effective March 21, 1979. Amendment filed September 21, 1988; effective November 6, 1988. Amendment filed May 17, 1990; effective July 1, 1990. Amendment filed June 26, 2001; effective September 7, 2001. Amendment filed January 17, 2003; effective April 1, 2003. Amendment filed September 9, 2005; effective November 23, 2005. Amendment filed June 28, 2007; effective September 11, 2007.

### 1200-3-4-.03 OPEN BURNING PROHIBITED.

- (1) No person shall cause, suffer, allow, or permit open burning except as specifically exempted by Rule 1200-3-4-.04 EXCEPTIONS TO PROHIBITION.
- (2) Repealed.
- (3) Repealed.
- (4) The open burning of tires and other rubber products, vinyl shingles and siding, other plastics, asphalt shingles and other asphalt roofing materials, and/or asbestos containing materials is expressly prohibited, and such materials shall not be included in any open burning conducted under the provisions of Rule 1200-3-4-.04 EXCEPTIONS TO PROHIBITION.
- (5) Repealed.
- (6) Repealed.

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§4-5-202, 68-201-101 et seq., and 68-25-104. **Administrative History:** Original rule certified June 7, 1974. Amendment filed January 10, 1977; effective February 9, 1977. Amendment filed September 21, 1988; effective November 6, 1988. Amendment filed March 5, 1993; effective April 19, 1993. Amendment filed November 22, 1993; effective February 5, 1994. Amendment filed April 7, 1995; effective June 21, 1995. Amendment filed June 26, 2001; effective September 7, 2001. Amendment filed July 9, 2001; effective September 22, 2001. Amendment filed January 17, 2003; effective April 1, 2003. Amendment filed September 9, 2005; effective November 23, 2005.

### 1200-3-4-.04 EXCEPTIONS TO PROHIBITION.

- (1) Open burning, as listed below, may be conducted subject to specified limitations. This grant of exception shall in no way relieve the person responsible for such burning from the consequences, damages, injuries, or claims resulting from such burning.
  - (a) Repealed.
  - (b) Fires used for cooking of food or for ceremonial, recreational or comfort-heating purposes, including barbecues, campfires, and outdoor fireplaces.
  - (c) Fires set by or at the direction of responsible fire control persons solely for training purposes, such as, for fire source training at fire academies or for local fire department training. However, routine demolition of structures via supervised open burning by responsible fire control persons is not considered fire training. Additionally, the person responsible for such burning, unless conducted at a recognized fire training academy, must certify compliance with the following requirements by written statement. The certification must be delivered to the Division of Air

(Rule 1200-3-4-.04, continued)

Pollution Control at the appropriate regional Environmental Field Office at least ten (10) working days prior to commencing the burn:

1. The open burning is being conducted solely for fire training purposes;
  2. All vinyl siding, carpet, vinyl flooring, asphalt roofing materials, and any other materials expressly prohibited in Rule 1200-3-4-.03, have been removed. However, the provisions of Rule 1200-3-4-.03(4) as it pertains solely to “other rubber products” and “other plastics” are waived for incidental plastic or rubber materials which are an integral part of a structure used for fire training, such as plastic plumbing, fixtures, and conduit; electrical wiring insulation, connections, switches, and fixtures; interior trim; glues and resins in manufactured wood products; and vinyl window and door frames. Sheathing, decking, roofing, exterior siding and trim, and structural load-bearing members whose composition is primarily rubber or plastics are not considered incidental;
  3. All regulated asbestos containing materials have been removed in accordance with Rule 1200-3-11-.02; and
  4. A traffic hazard will not be caused by the air contaminants generated by the fire training.
- (d) Fires consisting solely of vegetation grown on the property of the burn site. Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils, wood waste, or other ignition devices approved by the Technical Secretary.
- (e) Fires disposing of “wood waste” solely for the disposition of such wood waste as provided in T.C.A. §68-201-115(c). Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils.
- (f) Fires solely for the burning of bodies of dead animals, including poultry, where no other safe and/or practical disposal method exists. Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils, vegetation grown on the property of the burn site, and wood waste.
- (g) Smokeless flares or safety flares for the combustion of waste gases, provided other remaining applicable conditions of these regulations are met.
- (h) Such other open burning as may be approved by the Tennessee Air Pollution Control Board where there is no other practical, safe, and/or lawful method of disposal. Documentation demonstrating why the general open burning regulations cannot be met must be submitted.
- (i) Fires set at the direction of law enforcement agencies or courts solely for the purpose of destruction of controlled substances and legend drugs seized as contraband. Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils, and wood waste. The provisions of Rule 1200-3-4-.03(4) as it pertains solely to “other rubber products” and “other plastics” are waived for incidental plastic or rubber containers of said contraband.
- (j) Fires consisting solely of vegetation, manufactured lumber products not chemically treated to prevent insect or rot damage, such as plywood, fiberboard, and paneling, uncoated paper and uncoated cardboard subject to the following conditions:
1. The site of such burning is not nearer than one-half mile to 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 except such structures as may be located on the same property as the burning site.

(Rule 1200-3-4-.04, continued)

2. Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils, and wood waste.
  3. The person responsible for such burning must certify compliance with the distance requirements by written statement. The certification must include the types and amounts of materials projected to be burned, and must be delivered to the Division of Air Pollution Control at the appropriate regional Environmental Field Office at least ten (10) working days prior to commencing the burn.
- (k) Fires consisting solely of non-radioactive, explosive, shock sensitive, chemically unstable, or highly reactive wastes, packaging, or contaminated or potentially contaminated combustible materials. Priming materials used to facilitate such burning shall be limited to #1 or #2 grade fuel oils, and wood waste. The provisions of Rule 1200-3-4-.03(4) as it pertains solely to “other rubber products” and “other plastics” are waived for this exception. Open burning conducted under this exception is only allowed where no other safe means of disposal exists.
- (l) Fires consisting solely of materials resulting from a natural disaster, and when conducted in conformity with the following conditions:
1. Fires disposing of structural and household materials and vegetation are allowed only when those structures or materials are destroyed or severely damaged by natural disaster. Input from Emergency Management personnel may be requested in determining qualification with this criterion. The provisions of Rule 1200-3-4-.03(4) pertaining to structural and household materials may be waived if the persons seeking to open burn under this provision make a reasonable effort to remove all expressly prohibited material from the structural remains before ignition. The Technical Secretary reserves the right to inspect the proposed materials to be burned before ignition. The alternative use of chippers and grinders, landfilling, or on-site burial of waste in lieu of burning, if lawful, is encouraged;
  2. If a governmental collective burn site for disposing of structural and household materials and vegetation damaged by a natural disaster is planned, the person responsible for such burning must notify the Division of Air Pollution Control of the proposed location. The notification must be delivered to the Division of Air Pollution Control at the appropriate regional Environmental Field Office at least three (3) days prior to commencing the burn. The Division may request that alternate sites be identified to minimize impact to air quality. The alternative use of chippers and grinders in lieu of burning is encouraged;
  3. A traffic hazard will not be caused by the air contaminants generated by the fire;
  4. No fire shall be ignited while any air pollution emergency episode is in effect in the area of the burn; and
  5. Open burning conducted under this exception is only allowed where no other safe and/or practical means of disposal is available.
- (2) The Technical Secretary reserves the right to require a person to cease or limit open burning if emissions from the fires are deemed by the Technical Secretary or his designee to jeopardize public health or welfare, create a public nuisance or safety hazard, create a potential safety hazard, or interfere with the attainment or maintenance of the air quality standards.
- (3) Any exception to the open burning prohibition granted by this Rule Chapter does not relieve any person of the responsibility to obtain a permit required by any other agency, or of complying with other applicable requirements, ordinances, or restrictions.

(Rule 1200-3-4-.04, continued)

- (4) Failure to adhere to any applicable provision or condition of an exception to the open burning prohibition shall be construed as a violation of this Rule Chapter and is subject to applicable provisions of the rules and statutes of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Air Pollution Control and such corrective/punitive measures that may be deemed appropriate by the Technical Secretary of the Tennessee Air Pollution Control Board.

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§4-5-202, 68-201-101 et seq., and 68-25-105. **Administrative History:** Original rule certified June 7, 1974. Amendment filed January 10, 1977; effective February 9, 1977. Amendment filed February 5, 1979; effective March 21, 1979. Amendment filed May 7, 1979; effective June 21, 1979. Amendment filed September 21, 1988; effective November 6, 1988. Amendment filed May 17, 1990; effective July 1, 1990. Amendment filed March 5, 1993; effective April 19, 1993. Amendment filed April 7, 1995; effective June 21, 1995. Amendment filed June 26, 2001; effective September 7, 2001. Amendment filed March 25, 2003; effective June 8, 2003. Amendment filed September 9, 2005; effective November 23, 2005. Amendment filed June 28, 2007; effective September 11, 2007.

#### **1200-3-4-.05 REPEALED.**

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§68-25-105, 68-201-101 et seq., and 4-5-202. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed September 21, 1988; effective November 6, 1988. Amendment filed April 18, 1994; effective July 2, 1994. Amendment filed April 7, 1995; effective June 21, 1995. Amendment filed June 26, 2001; effective September 7, 2001.