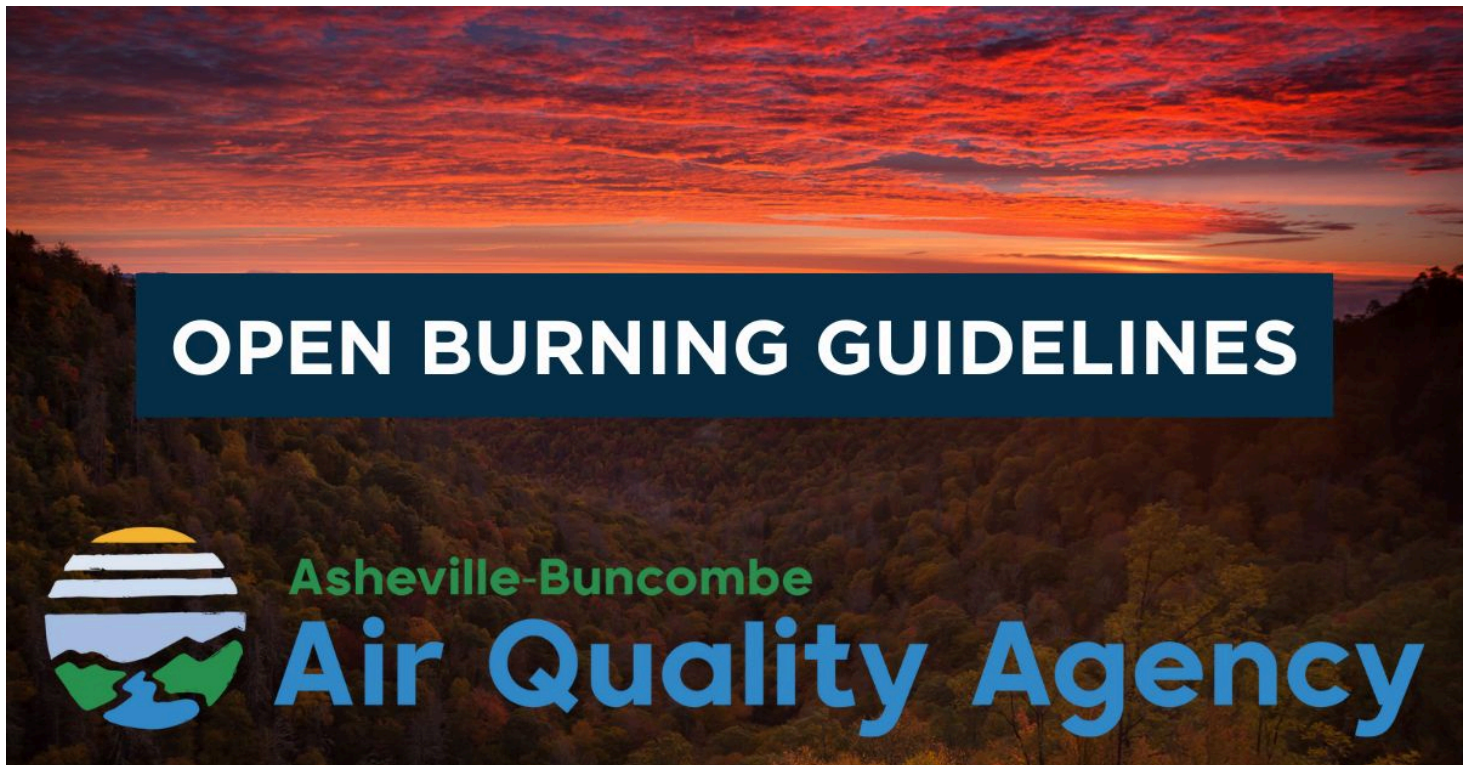


Open Burning in Response to Hurricane Helene



Due to the extremely large amount of storm debris caused by Hurricane Helene, many residents and businesses will turn to open burning as a means of disposal.

Residential Open Burning

The City of Asheville and Buncombe County are providing storm debris pick-up for residents.

Due to current high fire risks and potential impacts to the air we breathe, the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency and area fire chiefs are encouraging residents to not burn storm debris and allow it to be picked up for free and disposed of by the municipality.

If you must burn, the Agency would like to remind residents that the burning of leaves, brush, and yard trimmings is permitted on burning days between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., however the burning of household trash, building materials, asphaltic materials, cardboard, processed wood, and papers is always prohibited. Burning is also always prohibited in the City of Asheville. To find out if it is a burning day, please call 828-250-6767 or go to www.abairquality.org.

Storm Debris Open Burning

Under the state of emergency, and in order to dispose of material generated as a result of a natural disaster, permitting requirements for open burning storm-related debris can be waived. Permission is required, and a request can be made by providing written notification to the Director of Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency Ashley Featherstone that there is no other practical method of disposal of the waste. The request should also include the type of material being burned, an approximate amount, the location of the burning, and nature of the combustible sources.

Recent legislation passed by the State of North Carolina states that the following storm debris materials are allowed to be burned from now until March 31, 2025:

- Any solid and engineered wood products
- Vegetative land-clearing debris
- Yard trash (solid waste consisting solely of vegetative matter resulting from landscaping maintenance)

The Director will not grant permission for the burning if the primary purpose of the fire is to dispose of synthetic materials, refuse, or recovery of salvageable materials. Materials NOT allowed to be burned include inert debris such as asphalt shingles, tar paper, insulation, drywall, concrete, bricks or glass, tires, wire, plastics, refuse, dangerous, or hazardous materials.

Burning of storm debris must comply with the following conditions:

- Wind direction at the time of the burning and forecasted that day by the National Weather Service is away from any area, including public roads with 250 feet.

- The location of the burning is at least 500 feet from any occupied dwelling or commercial structure not located on the property on which the burning is conducted.
 - A signed, written statement waiving objections to the burning from residents within 500 feet may be obtained and the exception must be granted by the Director
- Initial burning begins only between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., and no combustible material is added to the fire from 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. the following day.
- No fires are initiated or vegetation is added to existing fires when the North Carolina Forest Service or a Buncombe County Fire Marshall has banned burning for that area.
- No fires are initiated or vegetation is added to existing fires when the Agency's air quality forecast area has been forecasted by the North Carolina Division of Air Quality to be in an Air Quality Action Day Code "Orange or above."
- To find out if it is a burning day, please call 828-250-6767 or go to www.abairquality.org.

Burning Storm Debris with an Air Curtain Burner (also known as an Air Curtain Incinerator):

The use of Air Curtain Burners to dispose of material generated as a result of a natural disaster has specific requirements:

- Duration of operations: The maximum length of time the burning at the approved disaster debris site can occur without an air permit is eight (8) weeks, with an option to request an additional eight (8) week extension
- Required distances: The air curtain burner shall be at least 300 feet from any dwelling, occupied structure, commercial or institutional establishment that is not located on the property on which the burning is conducted. This office highly recommends that you maintain as much of a buffer as possible between the burn site and any neighboring occupied structure. Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency may grant exceptions to the setback requirements if a signed, written statement waiving objections to the air curtain burning is obtained from a resident or an owner of each dwelling within 300 feet of the burning site.
- Prevailing winds: Wind direction at the time of the burning and forecasted that day by the National Weather Service is away from any area, including public roads with 250 feet.
- Permitting: In order to avoid Title V Permitting, air curtain burners will be limited to burning less than 35 tons per day. Companies can operate two air curtain burners at the same location with this limitation at the same site.
- Permissible material: Air curtain burners can burn the following materials:
 - Wood waste (untreated wood and untreated wood products, including tree stumps (whole or chipped), trees, tree limbs (whole or chipped), bark, sawdust, chips, scraps, slabs, millings, and shaving)
 - Clean lumber (wood or wood products that have been cut or shaped and include wet, air-dried, and kiln-dried wood products. Clean lumber does not include wood products that have been painted, pigment-stained, or pressure-treated by compounds such as chromate copper arsenate, pentachlorophenol, and creosote, or manufactured wood products that contain adhesives or resins (e.g., plywood, particle board, flake board, and oriented strand board)).
 - Yard Waste (grass, grass clippings, bushes, shrubs, and clippings from bushes and shrubs. Yard waste comes from residential, commercial/retail, institutional, or industrial sources as part of maintaining yards or other private or public lands)

The owner/operator shall request permission to conduct the burning using an air curtain burner by providing written notification to the Director of Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency with the following information:

- Location of the Air Curtain Burner, with a map that shows that the location meets the 300-foot setback requirement from occupied dwellings (a 300 foot ring on the map would be helpful)
- Date that unit will start operation
- Identification of the disaster for which the Air Curtain Burner is being used (specify the storm and the State of Emergency Declaration)
- Description of the types of materials that are being burned
- Description of the size and design of the unit (make/model, capacity, number of tons per hour or day)
- Amount of time expected to operate and expected end date
- Statement that there is no other means of disposing of the material