



# Outdoor Burning Safety



Before burning yard waste/debris, avoid injury by following these three steps.

## STEP ONE: Check SC Laws and Ordinances

The legality of open burning depends on **where** and **what** you burn.

Notify SC Forestry Commission (SCFC): <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/>

### Inside city or town limits:

Some towns or cities do not allow outdoor burning. Others may require a permit. Check with your local government (i.e. fire department, local fire marshal) before you burn anything outdoors.

## STEP TWO: Observe Safety

- Gather any needed tools and remain with the fire. Always keep a water hose, bucket of water, or a shovel with dirt/sand nearby to put out the fire.
- Check the weather forecast. Don't burn on a windy day. It is safer to burn after a soaking rain or when the humidity is higher than 30 percent.
- Burn between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Divide large piles into smaller manageable ones.
- Never use gasoline or other flammable liquids to start an outdoor fire.
- Watch for flying sparks.
- Keep clear of power lines and overhanging tree limbs. Create a firebreak around the burn site.
- Supervise children around any outdoor fires. If your clothes catch fire: **Stop, drop, and roll** until the fire is out.
- It is illegal to use burn barrels to burn garbage (i.e. household garbage, plastics).
- "Open" fires (bonfires, yard waste fires, or debris burning) need to be at least 50 feet away from anything that can burn.



## STEP THREE: Extinguish the Fire

To get your burn completely extinguished, drown the fire with water, mix the ashes with a shovel, and drown it again. This should take you a while. Drown and stir the ashes several times. Make sure there is no heat, glow, or flame remaining before leaving the area.

### Burning Yard Debris Outside City/Town Limits

To find the toll-free number for your county:

<https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/how-to-notify/>

**SC Forestry Commission: 1-800-777-3473**



If you decide to burn, remember:  
**If it doesn't grow, don't burn it.**