GRATZ BOROUGH

Burning in the Borough

Resident guide to Ordinance No. 070820B adopted July 8, 2020.

Do not burn prohibited materials

No yard waste: trees, stumps, leaves, brush or grass clippings, except an applicable ordinance exception described below.

Prohibited waste includes: plastics, tires, rubber, clothing, carpets, furniture, appliances, spoiled food, animal waste, commercial or industrial waste, hazardous substances, batteries, chemicals, oil, paint, solvents, corrugated cardboard or container board. Treated or painted wood, plywood and glued composite wood are prohibited. Construction and demolition waste is also prohibited. These examples are not the complete list in Section 203.

Rules for confined burning including burn barrels

Burn only materials not prohibited by the ordinance, **on the property where they were generated**. Obtain the landowner's consent. Do not burn on public property. Only one burning container is allowed per property.

When: Monday through Sunday during daylight, sunrise to sunset, with the fire completely extinguished by **7 p.m.** Burning must stop earlier if sunset occurs before 7 p.m.

Where: at least **100 feet from the nearest occupied building on another property** and **30 feet from any building or structure on the burn property**. The enclosed-incinerator requirements below are more restrictive.

55-gallon drum or equivalent: maximum 34.5 inches high by 23 inches wide; cover with a metal screen, grate or mesh to prevent material escaping. Place on a noncombustible base at least 12 inches wider than the drum diameter. No side or bottom openings except the permitted small flue holes. Replace a weakened or failed container.

Enclosed incinerator: maximum 1,000 gallons; requires at least two acres and a 200-foot setback instead of 100 feet. Additional size, enclosure and maintenance requirements apply under Section 206(G). Consult the full ordinance before use.

Supervise and control: stay until completely extinguished and keep fire-extinguishing equipment readily available. Prevent fire spread. No accelerants such as gasoline. Newspaper or dried wood may be used to start the fire. Do not create off-property offensive odors, harmful smoke, property damage or a nuisance.

Campfires outdoor fireplaces and special exceptions

Recreation: Section 205 permits and excludes campfires, outdoor fireplaces and properly zoned outdoor wood-fired burners from regulation under this burning ordinance. A campfire is a contained recreational or cooking fire no more than **6 feet wide and 2 feet high**; it is not a waste-disposal fire or bonfire. Other applicable laws and zoning requirements still apply.

Seasonal cleanup: Council may authorize a specific, limited spring or fall garden-cleanup period for yard waste generated on the same property. This is not automatic permission and does not authorize a central pile of collected resident brush.

Agriculture and fire training: Section 207 exempts weeds, brush and crop stubble burned as part of an active agricultural operation, subject to its burn-ban provision. Firefighting training requires the approvals specified in that section.

Burn bans and penalties

Check restrictions before burning. Section 208 prohibits confined burning during a weather-related ban imposed by the authorities named in the ordinance. Notices may appear in the newspaper, at the post office or Borough building, or on the Borough website. Other applicable emergency restrictions also control.

Ordinary violations: first offense - written warning; second - $200; third - $300; fourth and later - $600.
Burn-ban violations: first - $300; second and later - $600. Court costs, attorney fees and fire-extinguishment cost recovery may also apply under the ordinance.

Questions or complaints: Gratz Borough - 717-365-3399 | gratzboro@comcast.net
Read the ordinance: gratzboro.com/documents/ordinances/ | **Fire emergency:** call 911.