



MARLBOROUGH
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Outdoor Burning

Good Practice Guide

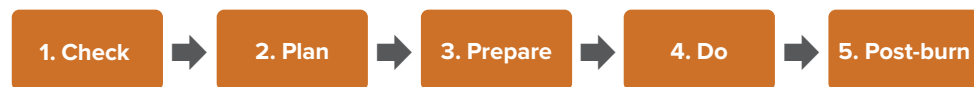


Outdoor fires can produce smoke and odour which can harm people's health and cause a nuisance. Fires can also affect property and the environment.

Planning an outdoor fire?

Use this guide to find out about good burning practices, avoid complaints from your neighbour, and ensure you are following the rules. This guide aims to provide those wishing to undertake outdoor burning with information and best practice guidance on how to undertake this activity in compliance with the relevant rules and reduce harm to people and the environment.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) state there are five key stages to work through when undertaking outdoor burning.



This guide has been divided into these stages to help you easily navigate what is required.

1. **Check** – Know the rules: Council and FENZ.
2. **Plan** – Location, Weather Conditions, Fuel Conditions, Timing.
3. **Prepare**
4. **Do**
5. **Post Burn**
6. **Other Tips**

1. Check legal and administrative requirements

Council Rules

The Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan (PMEP) has specific zone rules to minimise the negative effects of smoke, odour and air pollution from outdoor burning. See Page 4 for a summary of the PMEP Zone rules for outdoor burning. If you are unsure, please call the Council on (03) 520 7400.

- Ensure you are not burning any prohibited items – see the list in this guide.
- Contact and advise the Council if you are planning a large burn or a series of burns.
- For all zones, smoke must not be objectionable or offensive as detected at or beyond the legal boundary of the area of land on which the fire is occurring.

Fire & Emergency Rules

FENZ can impose fire restrictions for public safety reasons which can be in force at any time of the year.

You may need a fire permit from FENZ before lighting your fire - **this is in addition to the Council requirements.**

- If you are lighting a large fire, FENZ will need to be notified.
- Check the current fire season and apply for a permit on line at www.checkitsalright.org or contact FENZ on 0800 336 942.

2. Plan

This is the most important stage and will enable your burn to be successful while keeping people and the environment safe.

Location of the fire

Careful consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate area for a burn.

The burn area should be

- Away from buildings and roads.
- Away from a neighbouring property.
- Be positioned so that local weather conditions do not reduce safety distances.

What to burn

- Only burn well-dried material that can't be composted, recycled or used as firewood.
- All vegetation must be allowed to dry so it burns vigorously without causing much smoke - optimal time for drying will depend on the type of vegetation.

What never to burn

Burning these materials will create toxic smoke that is hazardous to human health. It is prohibited to burn these materials:

- Painted, stained, oiled or coated wood.
- Treated wood.
- Composite wood boards.
- Pellets containing copper and chlorine above certain amounts.
- Metals, including cables.
- All rubber including tyres.
- Materials containing metals, asbestos, tar and bitumen.
- Synthetic materials including plastics, foams, fibre glass, batteries, chemicals, paints, motor vehicle parts.
- Waste oil.
- Peat.
- Sludge from industrial processes.
- Animal, medical or chemical wastes.

Penalties

- Infringement notice requiring the payment of a \$300 fine.
- Serious or repeated breaches can result in Abatement Notice or Enforcement Order.
- Prosecution under the RMA, resulting in a fine of up to \$300,000 for an individual, up to \$600,000 for any parties other than individuals; or up to 2 years imprisonment plus a criminal record.

For all Zones in Marlborough, smoke must not be objectionable or offensive when detected at or beyond the legal boundary of the area of land on which the permitted burning activity is occurring.

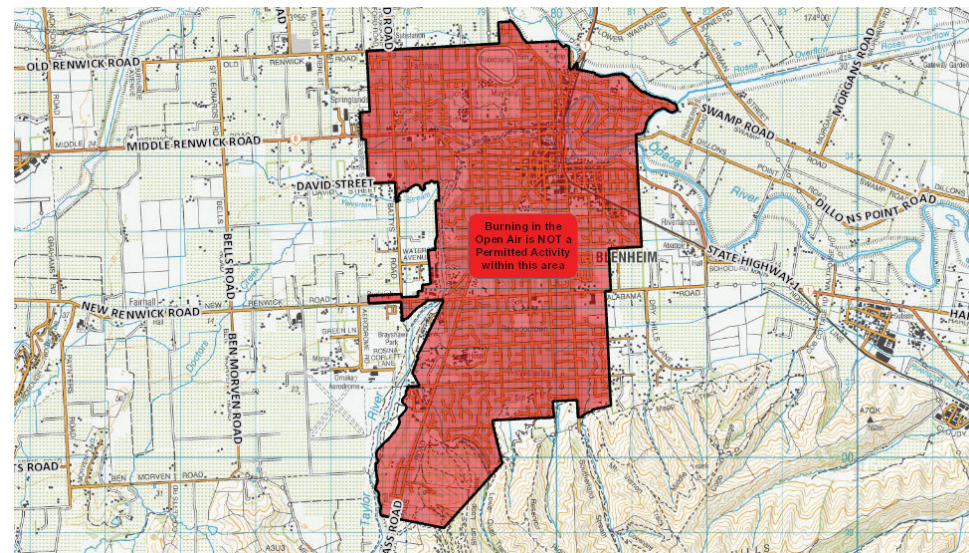
PMEP Rules for Permitted Outdoor Burning Outside the Blenheim Airshed.

| <div>✓ rule applies</div> <div>✗ rule does not apply</div> | The property where the burning is to occur must be located outside the Blenheim Airshed. | Only material generated on the same property or a property under the same management or ownership must be burned. | The total volume of material being burned must not exceed 2m ³ . |
|---|--|---|--|
| Urban Residential 1, 2, 3 Rural Living | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Open Space 1, 2, 3*, 4 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ *Open Space 3 this only applies if adjoining land zoned Urban Residential 1,2 (including Greenfields) & 3, Coastal Living or Rural Living. |
| Rural Environment | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Coastal Living, Marina | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Coastal Environment, Lake Grassmere Salt Works | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Business 1, 2 Industrial 1, 2 | Burning in the open is prohibited within the Blenheim Airshed unless the fire is used exclusively for the cooking or smoking of food for non-commercial purposes. | | |
| Business 3, Port, Port Landing Area, Coastal Marine , Floodway, Airport | Burning in the open is a discretionary activity and requires a Resource Consent to be issued. | | |

For Urban Residential 1, 2 and 3 Zones

Discharges to air within the Blenheim Airshed from outdoor burning in a brazier or a fire used exclusively for the cooking or smoking of food for non-commercial purposes is permitted when the following are complied with;

- A brazier must not be used during the months of May, June, July or August.
- Only wood with a moisture content of 25% dry weight or less is burnt, and no rubbish or prohibited materials are burnt.
- All reasonable steps are taken to minimise the amount of smoke discharged.



Before you light, check

- What Zone rules are relevant for your property?
www.bit.ly/PMEP-Vol2
- Is your property within the Blenheim Airshed?
www.bit.ly/BlenheimAirshed

Time of year and day of your burn

The time of year and the time of day will affect your burn.

Summer

- Check with FENZ as to the fire season status. In Marlborough there is likely to be a fire ban in force for a considerable period of this season.
- Burn in coolest part of the day.
- Dry conditions present the most risk, especially if combined with high winds.
- Light fires in gentle wind speeds of less than 10km/h.

Autumn & Winter

- Burn on dry days.
- Burn when wind speeds are gentle to moderate (winds speed of 10-25km/h).
- Don't burn on calm cold days when the smoke will not rise or disperse.
- Burn during the day. Burning in the late afternoon or evening results in the smoke not dispersing.

Spring

- This tends to be a period of unsettled weather with higher winds so the weather forecast is critical over the burn period.
- Be aware that wind direction will change between the morning and afternoon.

The following table shows how wind speeds relate to effects on trees and the land:








| Description | Mean Wind Speed | Appearance of Wind Effects | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| | | On a Tree | On Land | |
| Calm | < 1 knot < 1 km/h | Still | Smoke rises vertically |  |
| Light Air | 1 – 3 knots 1 – 5 km/h | | Smoke drifts, wind vanes are still |  |
| Light | 4 – 6 knots 6 – 11 km/h | Leaves rustle | Wind felt on face, vanes begin to move |  |
| Gentle | 7 – 10 knots 12 – 19 km/h | Leaves and small twigs move | Flags flap |  |
| Moderate | 11 – 16 knots 20 – 28 km/h | Small branches move | Dust and loose paper lifted |  |
| Fresh | 17 – 21 knots 29 – 38 km/h | Small trees in leaf begin to sway | Flags fully extended |  |
| Strong | 22 – 27 knots 38 – 49 km/h | Larger branches shake | Whistling in wires, umbrellas become difficult to use |  |

Image extracted from MetService <https://blog.metservice.com/BeaufortWindScale>

3. Prepare

- Remember to talk to / notify your neighbours.
- Get advice from FENZ at www.checkitsalright.nz
- Have water on hand and be prepared to put out the fire if conditions change resulting in a nuisance being caused.
- Know who will be starting and looking after the burn and how the burn will be extinguished.

4. Do

On the day of the burn

- Check the current fire season status to ensure you are still allowed to burn.
- Obtain the latest weather forecast and keep an eye on the wind direction and speed.
- Have water on hand so you are prepared to put out the fire if conditions change or you discover the fire is causing a nuisance.
- Notify the relevant people.
- Supervise the fire at all times throughout the burn and be prepared to respond to changing weather conditions.
- Call 111 immediately if at any point you are concerned about a risk to people, property, or the environment.

5. Post-burn

- Check the burn is completely out. Strong winds can bring the fire back to life and shift embers, creating unwanted fires.
- Turn piles to ensure there are no hot spots. Piles of burnt material can hold heat for a significant period of time after the burn.

6. Other Fire Tips

- Keep the fire pile to a manageable size.
- Never leave a fire unsupervised.
- Create a damp 3-metre safety zone around the fire.
- Stack vegetation and untreated wood loosely.
- Monitor where the smoke is going.
- Keep the fire burning hot by ensuring good air flow.
- Have water on hand and be prepared to put out the fire if conditions change or you discover the fire is causing a nuisance.
- Make sure the fire is completely out before it is left unattended.
- Limit the frequency and number of fires as much as possible.

Weather conditions

Weather conditions are critical to the success and safety of a fire.

Check conditions:

- A week before you plan to light the fire.
- A few days before.
- On the day of the burn.

Check the latest fire weather for the Marlborough Region at www.fireweather.niwa.co.nz

Weather information can also be found at the Met Service www.metservice.com

For wind speed and direction for selected Marlborough areas, check:

www.marlborough.govt.nz/environment/climate/weather

Remember

Weather can change and fires should not be left unattended so that action can be taken promptly if conditions do change.

Fuel conditions

- Do not burn green vegetation; this will result in lots of smoke.
- Only burn dry vegetation which will burn hot and fast with reduced smoke.
- Never add soil or any prohibited items.



Questions about burning? Contact the Council:

Marlborough District Council
15 Seymour Street
PO Box 443
Blenheim 7240

Ph: +64 3 520 7400
Email: mdc@marlborough.govt.nz
www.marlborough.govt.nz

