



## Questions About Open Burning

New York State Law regarding all open burning.

The burning of trash is prohibited statewide in all cases. The rules on incinerators prohibit burning household trash in wood stoves, fireplaces, and outdoor wood boilers. All burning of household trash releases dangerous chemicals into the air including arsenic, carbon monoxide, benzene, styrene, formaldehyde, lead, hydrogen cyanide and dioxin, among others.

Burning leaves is also banned in New York State. The Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company encourages you to compost leaves.

On farms, agricultural wastes may be burned on-site where they are generated including brush and wood produced by clearing fields and other activities. The fire must be located on agricultural land larger than 5 acres, and the materials must be capable of being fully burned within 24 hours. The burning of pesticides, plastics or other non-organic material is prohibited.

In addition, open burning is also the single greatest cause of wildfires in New York. The Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company works closely with DEC Rangers and will contact them in cases of flagrant violations.

Starting back on October 14, 2009, all open burning was prohibited in New York with several exceptions that include the following:

- ✓ Campfires less than 3 feet in height and 4 feet in length, width or diameter are allowed.
- ✓ Small cooking fires are allowed.
- ✓ Fires cannot be left unattended and must be fully extinguished.
- ✓ Only charcoal or clean, dry, untreated or unpainted wood can be burned.
- ✓ Ceremonial or celebratory bonfires are allowed.

In any town with a total population less than 20,000, you may burn tree limbs with attached leaves. The limbs must be less than 6 inches in diameter and 8 feet in length (DEC considers this as brush). This is not allowed from March 15 through May 15 due to the brushfire season. There are more exceptions and you should check with the Department of Environmental Conservation for a full list of their exceptions. ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov))

The Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company recommends that you recycle all appropriate materials, such as newspaper, paper, glass and plastic at the county transfer station, and compost your organic kitchen and garden waste.

A permit is not required in Whitehall, but the DEC will require a permit if you plan to burn brush in Fort Ann, Putnam or Dresden. They are designated as a "Fire Towns" under the Environmental Conservation Law.

The Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company does not perform prescribed burns to prevent forest fires. The burning of forest land is done only with DEC staff and upon their request. We will, on a rare occasion, burn a vacant structure for training purposes depending on various factors. If there is no training value for firefighters will not take on an acquired structure for training. We comply with *NFPA 1403 Live Fire Training* standard and *Bradley's Law* when conducting live fire training.

If you are conducting a controlled burn of brush after May 15th, notify Washington County Fire Control at 747- 3325, tell them your name and address. If you can, call any officer of the Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company. The Fire Chief is Bryan Brooks at 796-8035. The fire company does not conduct open burning for donations.