

# OPEN BURNING

Steamboat Springs Fire Protection District

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Routt County Department of Environmental  
Health

# Background

- In 1996 Routt County received a delegation of authority to administer open burn permits.
- From that time Open Burn permits have been issued by Environmental Health for air quality, and a second permit was issued by the local Fire Department to address fire safety issues.
- In 2011 a new permit process was established between RCDEH and each Fire District of Routt County to required only one inspection that covers both fire safety and smoke issues.

# Changes

- This year, Steamboat Fire Protection District created a Burn Season, allowing open burning only from November 1<sup>st</sup>- April 15<sup>th</sup> with the requirement of a minimum of 6 inches of snow on the ground.
- Steamboat FPD would longer be issuing smoke permits.
- Routt County Department of Environmental Health now tasked with Smoke Permitting for Open Burning.
- Other Fire Protection Districts in Routt County are still following the previous model for Open Burning.

# New Application



## ROUTT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

DATE ISSUED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE EXPIRES: \_\_\_\_\_ PERMIT #: \_\_\_\_\_

### OPEN BURNING PERMIT APPLICATION

Steamboat Rural Fire Protection District and areas of Unincorporated Routt County not in fire districts

APPLICANT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

BURN SITE LOCATION:  
 (Address & site description  
 e.g. fence row, ditch) \_\_\_\_\_

LANDOWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

BURN SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

PROXIMITY TO STRUCTURES: \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE OF BURN: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF DEBRIS TO BE BURNED: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT OF DEBRIS TO BE BURNED: (number & dimensions of piles) \_\_\_\_\_

AUXILIARY FUEL TO BE USED: \_\_\_\_\_ ALTERNATIVE TO BURNING: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED STARTING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL DAYS, HOURS NEEDED TO COMPLETE BURN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

GRANTING AUTHORITY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Colorado air pollution control laws and regulations prohibit open burning throughout the State unless a permit has been obtained from the appropriate air pollution control authority unless such activity is specifically exempted from the requirement to obtain an open burning permit. In granting or denying any such permit, the authority shall base its action on the potential contribution to air pollution in the area, climatic conditions on the day or days of such burning, and the authority's satisfaction that there is no practical alternate method for the disposal of the material to be burned.

Complete the application portion of the permit. Submit in its entirety to [clewandowski@co.routt.co.us](mailto:clewandowski@co.routt.co.us) or to:

ROUTT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
 136 6<sup>th</sup> STREET  
 P.O. BOX 770087  
 STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO 80477  
 PHONE: (970) 870-5588

Attn: Claire Lewandowski FAX: (970) 870-5404

Permit is subject to all standard open burning conditions and any additional conditions listed below:

#### STANDARD OPEN BURNING CONDITIONS:

- This permit shall be retained by the burn supervisor and shall be shown upon request of appropriate officials without delay. All open burning operations shall be subject to inspection by the Air Pollution Control Division and/or the local agency.
- During publicly announced periods of AIR POLLUTION EMERGENCY or ALERT, all permits are suspended in alert areas. In such cases, burning may be conducted only with direct permission from the granting authority.
- No burning will take place in any carbon monoxide ("CO"), PM or PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment or CO, PM, or PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment-maintenance areas from November 1 - March 31.
- No burning will take place in any ozone nonattainment or ozone attainment/maintenance area during an "Ozone Action Day Alert" any time during the calendar year.
- The Permittee is responsible for checking the daily air quality forecast, before igniting the burn, to ensure that no Air Pollution Alert or Ozone Action Day alert has been issued for the location of the burn. For more information: <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/?n=firewx>, RCDEH must be notified 24 hours before planned ignition.
- At no time shall the burn be left unattended. Burning shall be supervised by one or more responsible persons depending on the type of burning. Precautions shall be taken to localize the burning and in no way constitute a fire hazard to persons or property within or adjacent to the area of burning. The granting authority and the employees or agents thereof, in the issuing of a permit, do not assume any responsibility or results in damage to the person or property of the permittee, or the person or property of any third person.
- Burning shall be restricted to the item(s) and location identified in the permit.
- Only untreated, natural wood, leaves, dry prairie grass, slash and weeds may be burned. All burns must be performed in open piles. Burning in barrels or incinerators is not allowed.
- Materials will be ignited only between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. "Ignition of material" includes both starting a fire and adding more material to an existing fire. All fires must be completely extinguished no later than sunset.
- This permit is for compliance with air pollution requirements only and is not a permit to violate any existing local laws, rules, regulations, or ordinances regarding fire, zoning, or building. Per Steamboat Fire Protection District, open burning is allowed only from November 1 - April 15 with 8" or more of snow cover.
- The permittee is responsible for obtaining any additional permits and/or clearances from any appropriate fire control office, local agency, or other official prior to submission of this permit application.
- Permittee will notify the appropriate fire control office on each separate day of his or her intent to burn and the location of the burn. Steamboat Fire Dispatch - 970-879-1110.
- The permittee, permittee's employees, agents, and assignees shall abide by the conditions and restrictions contained herein. Any violations of these same conditions and restrictions shall render this permit null and void.

# Inspections

- Applicants are asked to submit pictures for single piles.
- On-site inspections are conducted for applications with multiple piles, when no picture is submitted, or if the picture does not show a clear representation of the pile.

# Permitted Pile





## **Picture is not exactly worth a thousand words**

This picture was submitted with an application request for burning 1 pile. Pile looks bigger than 10' x 10' as stated on permit. I decided to do an on-site inspection of the purposed pile.

Proposed burned pile- Picture submitted with permit by applicant



Erosion control blankets- full of sediment, dirt



Large stumps in the pile-roots full of dirt



Numerous logs larger than 12" diameter– may be considered for firewood



Green needles, pallets, stumps, numerous logs greater than 12" diameter.



Treated lumber. Construction trash

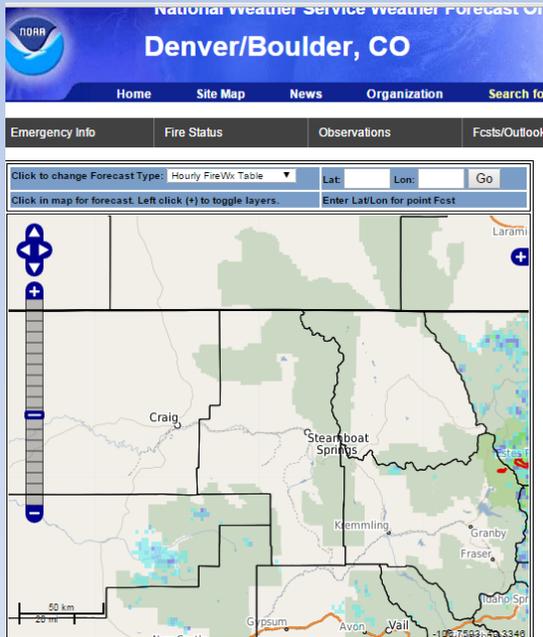


# Inspecting purposed burn piles that are covered with snow



# Daily Smoke Dispersal Rating

[http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/?n=neco\\_firedss](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/?n=neco_firedss)

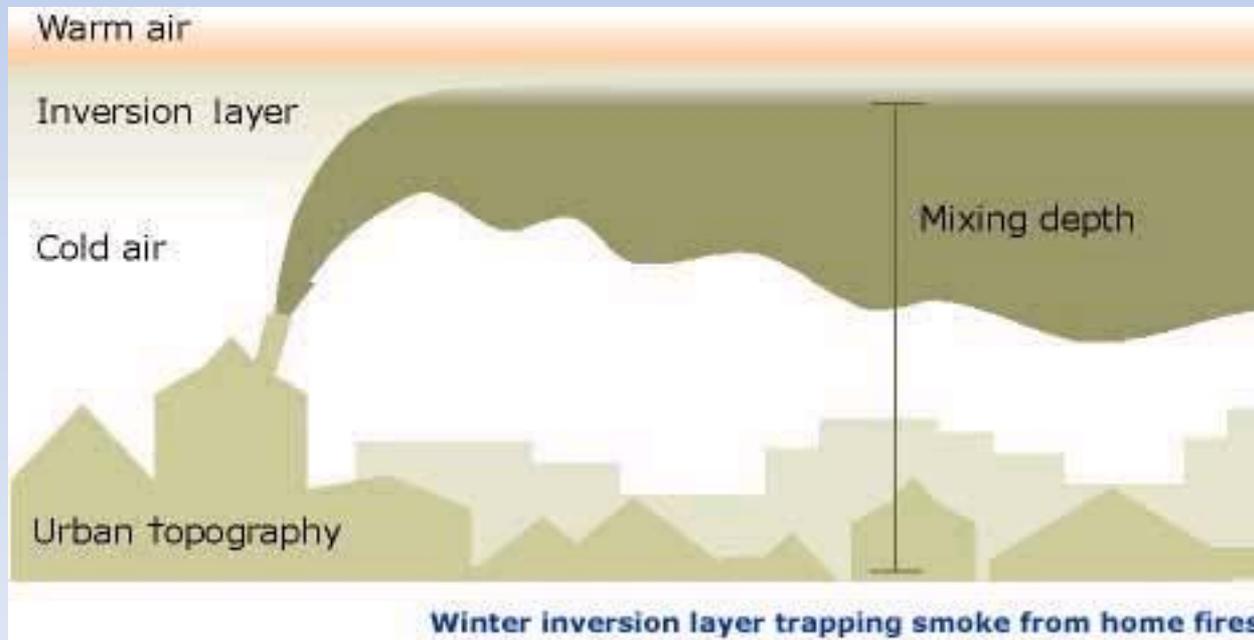


[www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/firewx/fwpmf/fwpmf.php?latitude=40.492526101255&longitude=-106.99546308631&latlon=Go&interface=firewx](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/firewx/fwpmf/fwpmf.php?latitude=40.492526101255&longitude=-106.99546308631&latlon=Go&interface=firewx)

VALID AT (MDT)	SC	PP	CWR	TF	TD	AT	MX	RH	MX	SFC	SFC	G	H	L	15K	15K	MIXG	TRAN	TRAN	VENTL	AJTV	QPF	SNOW	PF
	%	%	%	F	F	F	MN	%	MN	WIND	WIND	S	I	A	WIND	WIND	HGT	WIND	WIND	RATE	RATG	6HRS	6HRS	W
							TF		RH	DIR	MPH	T	L	DIR	MPH	AGL	DIR	MPH	KT-FT		DUR	DUR		
03/13-5P	28	4	0	52	29	52		41	E	7	10	4	1				7672	E	14	92572	G			
03/13-6P	21	3	0	50	29	48	52	43	41	E	6	9	3	1			6561	E	14	76904	G	0.00	0.0	
03/13-7P	18	2	0	47	29	44		49	E	6	6	3	1				5124	E	13	54431	F			
03/13-8P	16	2	0	44	29	41		56	E	5	5	3	1				3298	E	10	29776	P			
03/13-9P	14	1	0	40	29	37		64	E	5	5	3	1				1277	E	8	9178	P			
03/13-10P	12	1	0	38	28	34		68	E	5	5	3	1				750	E	7	2734	P			
03/13-11P	10	0	0	36	27	31		70	E	6	6	3	1				744	E	7	3051	P			
03/14-12A	18	3	0	35	26	30		71	E	6	6	3	1				919	E	7	5637	P	0.00	0.0	
03/14-1A	15	2	0	33	26	28		75	E	6	9	3	1				889	E	7	5425	P			
03/14-2A	12	2	0	32	26	26		80	E	6	9	3	1				892	E	7	5542	P			
03/14-3A	12	2	0	30	26	24		85	E	6	9	3	1				898	E	7	5634	P			
03/14-4A	14	1	0	29	25	23		85	E	6	9	3	1				847	E	7	5273	P			
03/14-5A	15	1	0	28	24	22		84	ESE	6	9	3	1				804	E	7	4805	P			
03/14-6A	17	2	0	28	23	22	28	81	85	ESE	6	9	2	1			810	E	6	4381	P	0.00	0.0	
03/14-7A	18	1	0	29	24	23		83	ESE	6	6	2	1				721	ESE	5	2091	P			
03/14-8A	19	1	0	30	25	25		80	ESE	5	5	2	1				785	SE	3	1010	P			
03/14-9A	21	1	0	34	26	30		73	ESE	5	5	2	1				1217	SE	3	3907	P			
03/14-10A	22	1	0	39	27	37		60	SE	3	3	2	1				2396	S	7	14674	P			
03/14-11A	24	1	0	46	27	45		49	S	3	3	2	1				3833	SW	10	33265	P			
03/14-12P	25	1	0	51	28	51		41	SSW	3	3	3	1				5037	W	13	52946	F	0.00	0.0	
03/14-1P	27	1	0	54	28	54		37	SW	5	5	3	1				5537	WSW	13	62207	G			
03/14-2P	31	1	0	56	28	56		35	WSW	7	10	3	1				5678	WSW	13	64257	G			
03/14-3P	35	2	0	57	29	57		34	W	8	12	3	1				5635	WSW	13	63792	G			
03/14-4P	40	1	0	58	29	58		33	WSW	8	12	3	1				5794	WSW	15	72569	G			
03/14-5P	44	1	0	58	29	58		34	WSW	8	12	3	1				5768	WSW	15	77792	G			
03/14-6P	49	1	0	57	30	57	58	36	33	WSW	7	10	2	1			5380	WSW	15	71184	G	0.00	0.0	
03/14-7P	49	0	0	53	30	53		41	SW	6	9	2	1				4332	SW	13	47507	F			
03/14-8P	49	0	0	49	30	47		48	S	5	5	2	1				3021	S	8	22250	P			
03/14-9P	49	0	0	44	31	41		59	S	5	5	2	1				1876	SE	3	5801	P			
03/14-10P	49	0	0	40	30	37		65	SSE	5	5	2	1				1297	SE	5	1522	P			

# Challenges

- Steamboat Fire Protection District's Open Burn Season
  - November 1<sup>st</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup>: WINTER!
  - Good for fire prevention. Bad for Smoke Dispersal



# Challenges

- Communication
  - Fire Dispatch was not referring burn notification calls to get permitted
    - A lot of unpermitted burning!
  - Poor, Fair, Good or Excellent Burn Days
    - Announcing smoke dispersal rating on website
    - Showing applicants how to use NWS website

# Challenges

- Frequent inspections of piles that did not meet the requirements, e.g., piles with stumps, dimensional lumber, larger than the maximum size. Why?
  - Piles constructed before contacting RCDEH
  - Permit does not specify all restrictions
  - No written information on pile requirements



# Work to Do!

- Permit Fee? Inspecting takes a lot of time!
- New application, more direction, less wasted time.
- Smoke dispersal rating- easier to use on website, better communication
- Collaborating with Steamboat Fire Protection and dispatch