Frequently Asked Questions

Residential Burn Notification Program

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What is a residential fire?

Residential fires refer to the burning of small amounts of yard waste accumulated on residential lots only. Washington state law restricts pile size to 4 feet diameter in most areas. Burn piles should contain only dry, natural vegetation. No trash, milled lumber, or construction debris is allowed. Visit www.orcaa.org/burning/outdoor-burning/

Why should I submit an online residential burn notification?

This is a cost-efficient means of sharing information about safe, legal outdoor burning. It also provides a means to reach out to potential burners in the event of fire safety or air quality burn bans, or other public safety events concerning fires.

How do I submit a notification of my residential burn?

ORCAA maintains a simple online notification form for residential burns. The form is easy to use and includes information on keeping your burn safe and legal.

How much does it cost?

The Residential Burn Notification process is free and easy.

What does ORCAA do with the information you collect?

In addition to providing, you with all the rules regarding keeping your fire safe and legal, the notification system gives ORCAA and local fire districts contact information for potential burners should there be a need to call a fire safety or air quality burn ban.

Who benefits from this voluntary notification system?

Everyone. ORCAA, fire districts, and residential yard waste burners all benefit. Even people who don't burn benefit because their neighbors receive better information on safe, clean burning practices. The system provides good information to burners about the best means to stay safe and legal when burning yard waste. That means the burners are less likely to cause complaints (fire or smoke related) and that, in turn, means ORCAA and fire districts can reduce their complaint response times and budgets. This also centralizes the notifications with one agency.

What are consequences for Fire Departments/County Fire Officials?

The notification data will be shared with fire officials throughout our six-county jurisdiction. They can assist in sharing information of the program, but they have no obligations.

How will the data be used?

The information gathered during the notification process will be used to share details about the safe and legal means of using outdoor burning to dispose of yard waste. If ORCAA or the local fire districts receive

complaints about outdoor burning in a neighborhood, we may reach out via email or phone to respondents in the area to check on their burn status. Additionally, during fire safety or air quality burn ban events, the information could be used to immediately reach out to potential burners.

What is ORCAA doing to get the word out about this?

We are working with local fire districts, county extension agents, and other departments to share information. We also promote the program through social media, newspapers and radio PSAs, and other media outlets. We plan to continue exhibiting at home and garden shows, farmers markets, and other public events, as well as attending any neighborhood association, social organizations, or HOA meetings we are invited to.

Who do I contact with questions?

You may call ORCAA at (360) 539-7610, visit our website, or email info@orcaa.org

You may also see instructional videos on completing the outdoor burn notification form at: ORCAA How-To Videos - YouTube

What is the legal authority of ORCAA to regulate outdoor burning?

Outdoor burning regulations are included in the Washington Clean Air Act, RCW 70A.15. Specifically, RCW 70A.15.5040: Limited outdoor burning—Establishment of program.

Will the data submitted be publicly available?

ORCAA and the fire departments we partner with are public agencies. As such, our records are open and accessible as required by the Washington Public Records Act. That said, the data is not automatically posted to public websites or information services.

Who will manage the online forms and databases?

ORCAA already has the system in place, and it has been used as an online service since 2012. Prior to that paper 'permits' were issued by Thurston County Fire Districts.

Who will have access to the database of current burners?

ORCAA will make the data available to any Fire District or County Department in both a spreadsheet and a Google Map.