



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor and City Council Members  
From: Tom DeMint, Fire Chief  
Bob Poncelow, Fire Marshal  
Re: Open Burning Ban Authority, Ordinance 64, 2013  
Date: April 16, 2013

Based on discussion at the Leadership Team meeting on Monday, April 15, PFA would like to offer the following additional information about the proposed ordinance.

**1. Please clarify the criteria for declaration of a burn ban.**

Criteria to be used for determining the need for a burn ban will include a combination of factors that point to critically high fire danger:

- a. **Wildland fuel moisture levels** in areas adjacent to the city limits—This daily analysis of the moisture levels in potential fire fuels guides PFA in evaluating the potential for serious wild fire. This includes the moisture levels in potential fuels including “10-hour fuel moisture” (small shrubs and grasses) and “1000-hour fuel moisture” (trees and larger fuels). If this key criterion is at a Level 9 over a sustained time period (indicating critically high fire danger), other criteria for imposing a possible ban on open burning would also be evaluated. Moisture levels include the following:

Level	10-hour fuel moisture	1000-hour fuel moisture
1	> 6%	> 11%
5	≤ 6%	≤ 11%
9	≤ 4%	≤ 8%

- b. **Long- and short-term weather forecasts** including temperatures, wind speeds and humidity levels as measured by local reporting stations (PFA Redstone Canyon Station, CSU Main Campus, and Chrisman Field weather stations) as well as the National Weather Service;

- c. **Level of available firefighting resources** from local, regional and national agencies;
- d. **Energy Release Components**—This measure of available energy (BTU's) per square foot near the flaming front of any currently burning wildfire. This measurement of fuel “build up” is an index of the potential for fire intensity should a fire approach the city limits;
- e. **State, County and other local fire bans** in place or anticipated;
- f. **Significant recent or on-going nearby or regional fires**; and
- g. **Atmospheric conditions** and degraded air quality

The City Manager, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and other fire personnel will evaluate these factors in combination to evaluate whether a serious fire hazard exists within the city limits of Fort Collins.

## 2. What is the difference between a Stage I and Stage II Burn Restriction?

The limitations imposed in a Stage I Burn Ban would include:

- Prohibit discarding of smoking materials
- Prohibit welding/torches in outdoor areas
- Spark arrestors required on equipment
- Prohibit pest control using flammable gas or liquids

The limitations imposed in a Stage II Burn Ban would include prohibiting:

- All Stage 1 restrictions PLUS
- Prohibit charcoal grills and campfires
- Prohibit fires in fire pits or outdoor fireplaces when the fuel is not liquid or gas

A Stage I Burn Ban would be considered when most of the criteria point to a critical risk of fire within the city limits. A Stage II Burn Ban would be considered when all or nearly all of the criteria are at a critical level.

If City Council Members would like to consider an alternative to the two tiered fire ban, the Ordinance could be modified between First and Second Reading to contain only one level of burn ban. This amendment might be considered if Council believes that it would be a clearer message to the community to have only one level of ban.

April 16, 2013  
Agenda Item # 24

# Ordinance 064, 2013

Amending the Code of the City of Fort  
Collins to Authorize the City Manager  
to Ban Open Burning in the City

# OPEN BURNING

Open Burning is:

- Campfires
- Warming fires
- Lighting of fused explosives, fireworks or model rockets
- Agriculture fires
- Burning of trash or debris



# OPEN BURNING

Open Burning is not:

- Fires in gas or liquid fueled appliances
- Wood burning appliances in buildings
- Charcoal grills at private residences
- Commercial, permitted fireworks displays
- Burning of irrigation ditches



# OPEN BURNING RESTRICTIONS EVALUATION CRITERIA

- ✓ Current weather conditions
- ✓ Short and long-term weather forecasts
- ✓ Recent weather trends such as temperature, wind, and humidity recovery
- ✓ Fire Danger based on local conditions
  - PFA Redstone Canyon Station
  - CSU Main Campus
  - Chrisman Field Weather Stations

# OPEN BURNING RESTRICTIONS EVALUATION CRITERIA

- ✓ Availability of resources locally, regionally, and nationally
- ✓ State, County and other local fire bans in place or anticipated
- ✓ Significant recent or on-going fires
- ✓ Atmospheric conditions and degraded air quality

# STAGE 1 FIRE RESTRICTIONS

## Stage 1 Restrictions

- Discarding of smoking materials
- Welding/Torches in outdoor areas
- Spark arrestors required on equipment
- Pest control using flammable gas or liquids

## Allowed under Stage 1

- Liquid or gas fueled appliances
- Commercial firework displays
- Fire department training or fire control
- Permanent fire pits/grates at picnic/camping sites
- Commercial cooking or smoking appliances



# STAGE 2 FIRE RESTRICTIONS

## Stage 2 Restrictions

- All Stage 1 restrictions
- Charcoal grills and campfires
- Fires in fire pits or outdoor fireplaces when the fuel is not liquid or gas

## Allowed under Stage 2

- Fires in liquid or gas fueled fire pits or outdoor fireplaces
- Fireplaces or wood stoves inside of buildings
- Fire department training or fire control
- Commercial cooking or smoking appliances with approval

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- City Manager notifies Council within 24 hours that restrictions are enacted/lifted
- Restrictions lifted by the City Manager when conditions warrant
- Restrictions enforced by Law Enforcement and the Poudre Fire Authority

