

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fall reminder about open burning restrictions in McHenry County

MCHENRY COUNTY, IL – As fall temperatures arrive and residents begin seasonal yard cleanup, the McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) reminds the public that open burning of landscape waste is regulated year-round under the County Public Health Ordinance.

Air quality affects everyone, particularly residents with respiratory or chronic health conditions. Regulated burning days and times help minimize impacts while allowing residents to manage landscape waste safely.

Open Burning Guidelines:

- Permitted only on weekends (Saturdays & Sundays) in April, May, October, & November from dawn to dusk.
- Burn areas must be at least 100 feet from habitable structures and 50 feet from non-habitable structures such as garages, sheds, or barns.
- Burning is prohibited in easements or when wind speeds exceed 10 mph.
- Adult supervision is required throughout the burn.
- A fire extinguisher, garden hose, or other water source must be available on-site.
- Only landscape waste generated on the property may be burned; materials such as garbage, paper, cardboard, construction debris, or animal waste are prohibited.

MCDH encourages residents to consider alternatives to open burning, including mulching, composting, native landscaping, using landscape services, or dropping off landscape waste at composting facilities or transfer stations. Municipal solid waste haulers providing regular residential pickup in McHenry County are required to offer landscape waste collection services—residents should contact their hauler for details.

Residents may report open burning concerns to MCDH, local law enforcement, fire departments, or fire protection districts. Response times vary based on priority. Residents within municipalities should also check with their city or village for any additional restrictions. Where no local ban or stricter ordinance exists, the County Ordinance applies.

For full details on the McHenry County Public Health Ordinance, alternative landscape waste options, and bonfire permit applications, visit MCDH.info or call the Division of Environmental Health at (815) 334-4585.

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