



SMOKE MANAGEMENT

Managing the smoke from your burn is an important and often overlooked concern. It is just good etiquette to ensure you don't smoke out your neighbors or cause a safety concern on nearby roads. Check the weather before you burn to ensure good smoke dispersal. Snowstorms provide good dispersal, for example. Mid-morning is usually a good time to light piles because the morning inversion is starting to lift. Re-pile the unburned fuels when the fire has cooled enough to allow you to do so; this will help avoid lingering smoke and make for a cleaner burn.

SMOKE DISPERSAL FORECAST INFORMATION

www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/AP_OB_Vent-Forecast.pdf



ALTERNATIVES

Even though burning is typically the most cost effective method of slash disposal, there might be other reasons to utilize an alternative method. The most common methods are lop and scattering, mastication, chipping and hauling. Each have their advantages and disadvantages. Discuss these options with your local forester or fire department.



USEFUL LINKS

Colorado Air Pollution Control Division

www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/apcd

Colorado State Forest Service

csfs.colostate.edu

Routt County OEM

co.routt.co.us

Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue

steamboatsprings.net

Oak Creek Fire Protection District

www.oakcreekfire.org

North Routt Fire Protection District

www.northrouttfire.org

West Routt Fire Protection District

www.westrouttfireprotectiondistrict.com



SLASH PILE BURNING GUIDE



This guide is intended to help landowners better understand what is involved with burning brush piles following a timber harvest or defensible space activity.



Slash and utilization. Slash can be defined as the branches, tops and other woody material left behind after logging and/or other forest treatments. Utilizing all material possible (e.g., larger material for firewood) is the first step in minimizing pile size and maximizing burning efficiency.



Burning goals and safety. There are two goals when burning your brush pile: (1) burn the pile safely and (2) burn the pile as completely and efficiently as possible. Perhaps the most important safety tip is to wait to burn your pile until there is adequate snow cover (minimum of 4"-6") and that the snow is likely to stay around. This will minimize the chance of fire escape. Locate your pile in openings, away from trees and brush. Wear fire resistant clothing and have a safety plan in case something goes wrong.

Pile Size. The size and composition of your pile is important. Ideally, the pile should be as high as it is wide. It is important to keep non-vegetative material out of the pile. Dirt, in particular, can really impact how a pile burns. Stumps, construction material or other debris is not allowed.

Lighting the pile. Propane weed burners are an efficient and generally safe way to ignite piles. Never use gasoline! It is always a good idea to light a small portion of the pile as a test burn to see if the pile will burn well and that smoke will disburse. Try to light the pile on all sides, starting downwind and working your way upwind.



Burn site rehabilitation. It is recommended that the burn area be rehabilitated the season following the burn. The burn will typically sterilize an area of the soil, making it susceptible to weeds. The soil in and around the burn should be stirred to re-inoculate the soil with beneficial micro-flora and fauna. Complete the rehabilitation by seeding the area with a native grass seed mix.



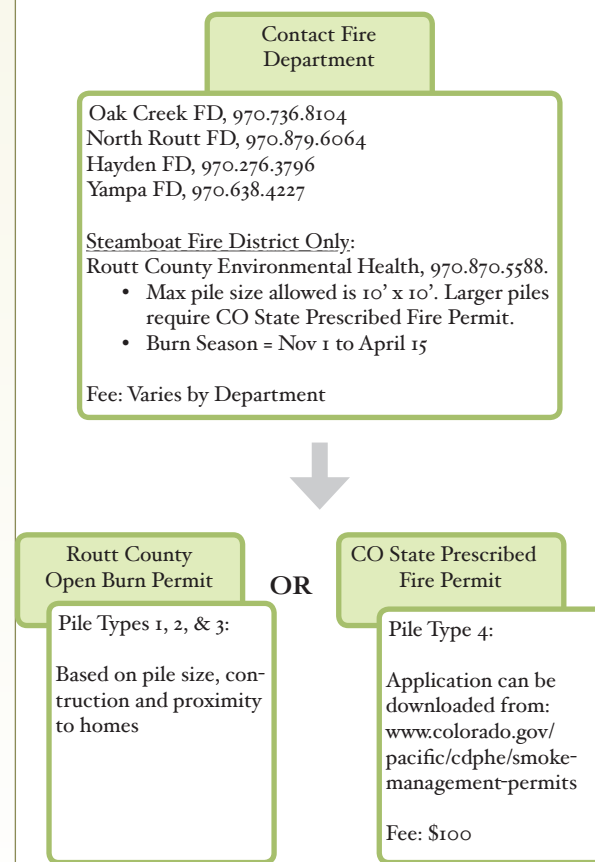
BURNING PERMITS

The type of material being burned will determine what type of permit, if any, is required. The state defines agricultural burning as 'the open burning of cover vegetation for the purpose of preparing the soil for crop production, weed control, maintenance of water conveyance structures related to agricultural operations, and other agricultural cultivation purposes.' These burns are generally exempt from permitting; however, it is always a good idea to contact your local fire department for confirmation.

Forestry practices are not considered exempt and do require a permit. Permitting in Routt County has been simplified to a single step: Contact your local Fire Department for an inspection and permit. This inspection will determine: pile size and type; any burn-day restrictions needed; and, any fire safety concerns. Should the pile size be too large (Type 4) a Colorado State Prescribed Fire Permit will be required.

Regardless of fire type, always contact Routt County Dispatch (970.879.1110) before you burn.

Permitting Process



Burn Day Checklist

