



Backyard burning



Smoke and particles from open-air fires can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe, it can also have health impacts.

This fact sheet may help you to reduce smoke impacts and meet legal requirements.

The criteria

1. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) will only issue permits for fires outside of Urban Areas. Guidance on whether you are located in an Urban Area can be found at: www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/urban-boundary-mapping
2. Backyard fires in Urban Areas are allowed by Council's Local Law only if contained in cooking or heating appliances. Note: Incinerators are not a cooking or heating appliance.
3. If burning vegetation material outside Urban areas larger than 2m in height, length or width you must obtain QFES approval. Applications for a permit can be made to your local fire warden found at www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au
4. All fires must comply with the provisions of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* and not cause a smoke nuisance to surrounding properties.

5. All fires must comply with any fire restrictions or bans declared by the State Government from time to time. These details can be found at: www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au

The law

When investigating a smoke nuisance complaint, Council will consider

- the amount of smoke;
- the duration, rate of emission and characteristics
- the sensitivity of the environment and impact that it has had or may have;
- views of other neighbours or complainants; and
- other relevant criteria

If the smoke is determined to be a nuisance, is not in an enclosed fireplace designed to prevent escape or contains harmful burnt material, enforcement action may be taken by Council.

QFES administer requirements relating to permits and fire bans/restrictions. Failure to comply with these requirements may also lead to further compliance action.

Be a good neighbour

Talk to your neighbours. Find out what concerns they have, or ask for suggestions to solve problems. Solutions can often be found which satisfy everyone.

Handy hints

- use clean dry firewood in cooking and heating appliances
- recycle or reuse wastes where possible;
- take large branches, palm fronds or trees to Council waste tips or transfer stations;
- give fires maximum air-flow for efficiency, resulting in less smoke;
- ensure adequate fire-control for safety; and
- observe weather conditions before lighting fires. If possible, choose a calm day.

Contact details for further information

For further information please contact Council's Environmental Health Section on 1300 79 49 29.

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