

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
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**POLICY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF
THE OPEN BURNING PROGRAM**

ADOPTED: March 17, 2015
EFFECTIVE: April 17, 2015

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and procedures for the administration of the open burning permit program in Jefferson County Colorado.

BACKGROUND

Under contract with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) the Department administers an open burning permit program. This program is to assure that any opening burning complies with the provisions of Regulation 9 of the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission. Most open burning permits are issued in conjunction with forest management activities undertaken to lessen the danger of wildfire.

To obtain an open burning permit the property owner files an application (which also includes local fire department approval). Department staff then performs a site inspection to verify that only slash such as limbs, branches and other natural materials will be burned. If approved, the permit is issued, allowing the owner to burn based on fire department restrictions and when permitted by the state health department based on current air quality forecasts. Although the permit is technically valid from July 1 to June 30, these requirements limit burning in the mountain region of the County to the winter months when the ground is snow-covered. To cover costs of our site visit and to administer the program the Department charges a standard fee for each application.

Since most opening burning takes place on large forested tracts it is often an ongoing process that occurs every year as new areas are cleared and thinned. While permits must still be issued for each burning season, staff believes that once permittees have established a history of compliance, further routine site inspections are unnecessary and unduly burdensome to the applicant. Therefore, staff believes that under those circumstances the application fee could be reduced to reflect only the administrative costs of the program.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH that the following guidelines shall govern the administration of the open burning permit program in Jefferson County.

APPLICATIONS

1. Prior to burning, the property owner shall submit an application to the Department, including approval of the local fire district or department for the proposed burn. This application shall include the appropriate fee.
2. The Department will perform a site inspection to determine if the proposed burn complies with the requirements of Regulation 9. If so, the Department shall issue the appropriate permit.
3. Once the Department has performed at least three (3) site inspections and the same property owner has demonstrated compliance with the permit requirements for that period, the Department will no longer conduct site inspections for each subsequent burning permit application and the application fees will be reduced accordingly to cover administrative costs.
4. The Department shall maintain records of any reported problems associated with the approved burn, including any fire safety issues. Should any evidence of noncompliance be documented, site inspections will be reinstated per #3, above and the regular fee application fee will apply.

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