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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS  
RELEASE**

**County Fire and Emergency Services Controlled Burning Guidelines**

The Washington County Division of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has issued a list of guidelines for citizens to follow concerning open-air burning.

DFES Director Kevin Lewis cited a “significant rise” in fire companies’ responses to recent grass, brush, woods and wildland fires caused by open-air burning.

“Open-air burning has been the leading cause of wildfires in Washington County for many years. As current dry weather conditions exists and along with current winds our threat of fires associated with open-air burning will continue to rise.” Lewis said.

The 15-point guidelines include:

1. The Washington County Health Department at 240-313-3400 and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulate all controlled burns.
2. You must notify Fire and Rescue Communications at 240-313-2900 prior to, and at the conclusion of any burning occurrence.
3. Controlled burns require permission from the Washington County Health Department. They will determine whether a permit is required or not.
4. Only the Washington County Health Department can grant permission to burn.
5. If there is a problem with a controlled burn the Washington County Health Department is to be notified at 240-313-3400. The Fire Marshals office will only get involved if there are extenuating circumstances such as injuries that are a result of the controlled burn, threats to personal property etc.
6. If there are any complaints about the controlled burn it must be extinguished. No nuisance can be created.
7. Fires shall NOT be started with any type of accelerants. (Tires, fuel oil, gas etc)
8. The fire must be attended at all times.

9. Only products produced on the property can be burned (branches, yard debris, etc)
10. Trash cannot be burned.
11. Burn barrels are not allowed except under certain circumstances.
12. You must stay a minimum of 200 feet from any dwelling and 200 feet from a wooded area per National Fire Protection Association standards and State regulations.
13. All burn bans must be adhered to.
14. All requests specific to field burning permits must specifically contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service. Their burning regulations specific to “open air burning” can be found at [www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/wfm.asp](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/wfm.asp).
15. Controlled burns are not allowed within the Hagerstown city limits. Special exceptions may be requested through the Hagerstown Fire Marshals office for certain events.

For additional guidelines and specific "burning regulations" within Maryland, individuals can contact the Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service or go to [www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/wfm.asp](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/wfm.asp).

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