

## **OUTDOOR FIRE PITS, OUTDOOR FIREPLACES & CHIMINEAS GUIDANCE FROM THE WEST BARNSTABLE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

June 5, 2014

Outdoor Fire Pits, Outdoor Fireplaces, Chimineas and a variety of other similar devices and installations have become popular and now enjoy widespread use throughout West Barnstable and the Commonwealth. Questions occasionally arise about how these devices and installations fit into the open burning regulatory scheme. The West Barnstable Fire Department (WBFD) provides the following guidance on this topic.

These devices and installations are not specifically regulated under the Fire Prevention Laws (Chapter 148 of the General Laws) or under the Air Pollution Prevention Regulations (310 CMR 7.00) and therefore the WBFD believes them to be lawful. However, there are laws and regulations that do apply to their use and installation as follows:

1. You can only burn clean firewood. You may not burn trash, refuse or other similar materials (310 CMR 7.07 and 310 CMR 7.08).
2. Any open burning that creates a nuisance, a condition of air pollution (i.e. excessive smoke) or a hazard to others is prohibited. (310 CMR 7.07).
3. These devices must be located so they do not pose a fire hazard and the fire chief authorized to determine and remedy such fire hazards (GL Chapter 148 Section 5).
4. The Fire Department has jurisdiction to enforce all of these laws (310 CMR 7.07 and GL Chapter 148 Section 5).

The WBFD recommends that if you install or use one of these devices that you do the following:

1. Burn only clean firewood.
2. Use paper or commercial fire starters (i.e. paraffin based products).
3. Do not use gasoline, diesel, kerosene or other similar products to start these fires.
4. Do not use these devices under any kind of roof, overhang or awning.
5. Do not use them if weather conditions will blow smoke onto a neighbor's property. Be sensitive to others who may have respiratory illnesses (asthma, COPD, etc.) that can be exacerbated by smoke.
6. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Dispose of all ashes far away from buildings and brush.
8. Have a means of extinguishing the fire readily at hand.

It is not necessary to obtain a permit or permission from the WBFD to install and operate these devices. The WBFD will come out to view your installation and provide you with fire safety advice if you wish.

BBQ grills, smokers and other outdoor wood, propane, natural gas or charcoal fired cooking devices require no permit or special permission to use from the fire department.