

Recreational Fire Permit Questions

Do I need a permit to have a recreational fire on my property?

Yes. A Recreational Fire Permit is required to have a wood burning recreational fire within the City of Grand Rapids. A Recreational Fire Permit may only be issued for single-family or two-family (duplex) properties and may not be issued for properties containing 3 or more dwellings.

How do I apply for a permit?

Applications will only be accepted online and can be submitted 24/7. Applications can be submitted using the Development Center kiosk if you do not have Internet access or need assistance from City staff. The Development Center is located at 1120 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 and is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM (excluding holidays).

What information is required in addition to the permit application?

If the applicant is not the owner of the property where the recreational fire is proposed, the applicant must attach to the application a signed permission letter from the owner. Additionally, a site plan illustrating where the fire container will be located on the lot must also be attached to the application. [An example site plan can be downloaded here.](#)

How long is my Recreational Fire Permit valid?

Permits are valid for one (1) year from the date of issuance. An application is required to renew a Recreational Fire Permit.

What can I burn?

Only seasoned dry firewood can be burned. Burning of yard waste, leaves, refuse, trash, building materials, or other materials is **expressly prohibited**.

How much does a permit application cost?

The initial permit applications are \$52 and annual permit renewal fee is \$10. Application and renewal fees are non-refundable.

After my application is submitted, how long will it take before I receive my permit?

Once an application and applicable fee is submitted, the application will be reviewed to determine eligibility and completeness. Within ten (10) business days, a written notice of the application for a Recreational Fire Permit will be sent to the following:

- The address of record for all buildings, condominium units, apartments, business suites, and other units intended for human occupancy located within one hundred twenty (120) feet of any lot line of the real property on which the recreational fire is proposed. For buildings that contain two or more condominium units, apartments, or business suites this notice shall be sent to all addresses of record within a building that is physically located entirely or partially within one hundred twenty (120) feet of any lot line of the real property on which the recreational fire is proposed.
- The address of record for the owner of all real properties located entirely or partially within one hundred twenty (120) feet of any lot line of the real property on which the recreational fire is proposed. For real properties that contain condominiums, this notice shall only be sent to the

owners of units physically located in a building that is entirely or partially within one hundred twenty (120) feet of any lot line of the real property on which the recreational fire is proposed.

- If a recreational fire is proposed on a lot containing a two-family dwelling, written notice of the application for a recreational fire permit shall also be sent to the physical property address of the other unit within that two-family dwelling.

Property owners and occupants will be given twenty-one (21) days to respond with objections to the permit issuance. If there are no objections received within that timeframe, the permit shall be issued. Overall, the entire process should take approximately one month. Please note that incomplete applications may delay the permitting process.

What are the lot requirements for a recreational fire?

- Single-family or two-family property
- Fire container must be at least 20 feet from any structure or combustible material.
- Fire container must be at least 20 feet from any lot line, roadway, alleyway, or fence
- Fire container must be at least 15 feet from any overhead line

What are the requirements for a fire container?

The fire container must be a recreational in-ground or outdoor portable fire pit, chiminea, or other free standing container designed for use in having safe and controlled outdoor fires. It may not be larger than three (3) feet wide, three (3) feet deep, and three (3) feet tall (exclusive of feet, legs, or chimney). It must be made of non-combustible materials and covered by a screen or other spark cover/arrestor.

A garden hose, fire extinguisher, or other means of extinguishment must be readily available for immediate use.

Can I dig a fire pit?

Yes. The Fire pit may not be larger than three (3) feet wide, three (3) feet deep, and three (3) feet tall.

When can I have a fire?

With a valid Recreational Fire Permit, burning is allowed between 7 AM and 10 PM, EXCEPT on high risk fire days, on Ozone Action Days, or on any day designated as unsafe by the Fire Chief. The fire must be attended by an adult 18 years or older at all times.

How can I determine whether my neighbor has a Recreational Fire Permit?

Information regarding permits for specific properties can be searched and found online at <https://grandrapids.buildingeye.com/planning>. Information can also be obtained by contacting the City's Development Center at (616) 456-4100.

How do I file a complaint regarding a neighbor's fire?

If your neighbor is burning without a permit, you may submit a complaint to 311 during normal business hours (8:00am - 5:00pm) or to 911 if an immediate health concern is present.