

Wildland-Urban Interface Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP)

And

Wildfire Safety Annex Guernsey County Emergency Operations Plan

For

Guernsey County, Ohio

In conjunction with:

Guernsey County EMA
Guernsey County Fire Chiefs
ODNR Division of Forestry

FOREWORD

Wildland-urban interface is defined as "any area where potentially combustible wildland fuels are found adjacent to combustible homes and other structures; a zone where man-made improvements intermix with the wildland fuels." As more houses are built in and near the woods and fields of Ohio, the wildland – urban interface has expanded, and along with it the concern of detrimental wildfire effects on citizens and property. It has become increasingly difficult for firefighters to protect valuable property and homes while at the same time trying to control wildfires. As a result, it is critically important that emergency responders and residents take an active and responsible role in ensuring that their home and property are prepared for wildfire events.

Emergency managers and fire departments in Guernsey County have recognized that conditions in many properties within their respective fire districts qualify under this definition for wildland-urban interface, and have therefore deemed it appropriate to develop this Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan.

Wildfires within the wildland-urban interface have the potential to cause tremendous damage to valuable personal and public property; however, mitigation measures can be taken that effectively reduces the probability that serious harmful effects from wildfire will occur. This plan is not meant to serve as an operational response guide to wildfire suppression. This document defines these measures and outlines a course of action for stakeholders to consider when implementing hazard mitigation within the wildland-urban interface.

The goals of this plan are to:

- Reduce the vulnerability of the population and property of Guernsey County to injury and loss resulting from wildland fires.
- Effectively educate emergency responders and residents regarding their responsibilities for the prevention of wildfire and mitigation of wildfire hazards in the area.
- Define preparedness and community safety action items for Guernsey County stakeholders.
- Provide awareness and education of wildfire causes and effects among Guernsey County residents.

The assistance provided by the following agencies in the preparation of this plan is gratefully acknowledged:

Chiefs and members of Guernsey County Fire Departments
Trustees of Guernsey County townships
Guernsey County EMA
ODNR Division of Forestry

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II. SITUATION

According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry Wildfire Hazard Assessment, Guernsey County ranks overall moderate to high in wildfire risk (assessment completed 10/2012 - factors include reported wildfire occurrence, reported acres burned by wildfire, fuel / land cover type, WUI value (UW SILVIS lab)).

Landscape

According to the 2010 census, Guernsey County has a total area of 528 square miles and a population of 40,087, which is a decrease of 1.7% from 40,792 in 2000. There are 19 townships in Guernsey County, nine villages, five unincorporated communities, and one city. Twelve fire departments provide primary response coverage within Guernsey County. The topography in Guernsey County is flat to rolling, with some steep and variable terrain in places. There are numerous homes scattered throughout the rural portions of the county.

Guernsey County contains several public properties that are owned and/or managed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Townships	Villages	Communities	Cities
Adams	Byesville	Birmingham	Cambridge
Cambridge	Cumberland	Buffalo	
Center	Fairview	Derwent	
Jackson	Lore City	Kimbolton	
Jefferson	Old Washington	Kipling	
Knox	Pleasant City		
Liberty	Quaker City		
Londonderry	Salesville		
Madison	Senecaville		
Millwood			
Monroe			
Oxford			
Richland			
Spencer			
Valley			
Washington			
Westland			
Wheeling			
Wills			

Fire Department	Approximate Primary Coverage Area (sq. miles)
Antrim CVFD	126
Byesville FD	24
Cambridge FD	35
Cassell Station FD	60
Cumberland VFD	74 (including Noble and Muskingum response areas)
Fairview FD	30
Liberty CVFD	82
Lore City FD	27
Old Washington VFD	41
Pleasant City FD	25
Quaker City FD	68 (including Noble response area)
Senecaville FD	53 (including Noble response area)

Owner / Manager	Property	Approximate Area (acres)
ODNR Wildlife	Buffalo Fork Wildlife Area	199
ODNR Wildlife	Dan and Margaret James Wildlife Area	75
ODNR Wildlife	Egypt Valley Wildlife Area	271 (Guernsey Co portion)
ODNR Parks / Wildlife	Salt Fork State Park / Wildlife Area	21,055

Values at Risk

The WUI is expanding in Guernsey County as more citizens are relocating to rural and/or wooded lots. This has resulted in more homes being built in close proximity to continuous vegetation that could be flammable in wildfire situations. Large tracts of agriculture ground pose a risk to grass and agriculture residue fires in spring and fall, and crop fires are a risk during drought conditions. Recent oil and gas development has resulted in high value infrastructure across the landscape in Guernsey County.

Defensible Space and Access

Defensible Space is defined as the area where accumulations of brush, leaf litter, and flammable vegetation are cleared from around a structure to a recommended distance of approximately thirty feet. Defensible space serves two purposes

1. Disrupts fuel continuity and serves a fuel break and barrier to the spread of wildfire towards the structure.
2. Allows room for firefighters to bring in wildfire fire suppression equipment to prevent wildfire from encroaching towards the structure.

Rural setting in Guernsey County provide for seclusion of being in a more natural appearing environment. As a result, many home and property owners prefer to allow trees, brush, leaves, grass, and vegetation accumulate in close proximity to their structures. Defensible space is not commonly practiced among homeowners. Access is very limited in some areas, with some areas and homes virtually unreachable by large fire/rescue apparatus due to narrow driveways. Many structures are not visible from roads and many driveways are not marked clearly with reflective address numbers.

Hazards

The vast majority of wildfires in Ohio are human caused. Most are caused by escaped debris or trash burning, followed by incendiary ignitions (arson), and those of unknown or undetermined origin. Urban or suburban transplants to rural Guernsey County may contribute to increase wildfire hazard, in part because many of these new residents are not familiar with how fire reacts and burns in varying environmental and weather conditions. Burning of debris, yard waste, and trash are not uncommon events for many residents of Guernsey County. The fact that most wildfires are caused by humans allows an opportunity to prevent these occurrences through awareness, education, and prevention campaigns.

Building Codes Addressing Wildfire Concerns

There are currently no building codes, covenants, or rules in place to specifically address wildfire concerns when constructing homes or buildings in incorporated or unincorporated parts of Guernsey County.

Fire Occurrence in Guernsey County

Wildfire statistics for Guernsey County between 2004 and 2013 (ten years) include:

Total number of fires reported:	176
Total acres burned reported:	463

10-year average annual fire occurrence:	18
10-year average annual acres burned:	46
10-year average acres per fire:	2.5 acres / fire
Total number of fires confirmed to be caused by lightning:	3
Total number of acres burned in lightning caused fires:	11.5

* These statistics include only those wildfires that were reported to ODNR Forestry through official wildfire reporting methods. It is very unlikely that 100% of wildfires were reported in Guernsey County were reported; therefore, actual occurrence and acres burned are likely greater than represented.

Summary

The factors described above immediately raise concerns in terms of property safety regarding wildfire. When compound with a need for improved awareness and understanding of wildfire dynamics, the wildfire hazard level becomes more elevated. Since nearly all wildfires in Guernsey County are caused by human activity, they are preventable through awareness, education, and prevention efforts.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. PREPAREDNESS

The most efficient and cost-effective recourse against wildfire is preparedness. Preparedness for community wildfire safety comes at various levels of organization. Specific action items for each level are detailed in Section IV Responsibilities and Duties. The most basic level of wildfire preparedness, and one that pertains to all levels of organization is awareness – details of awareness are contained in item B of this section.

B. LEVELS OF AWARENESS

Wildfire season in Ohio occurs primarily in the spring (March, April and May) before vegetation has turned green, and the fall (October and November) when leaf drop occurs. During these times, and especially when weather conditions are warm, windy and with low humidity, dead and cured vegetation is particularly susceptible to burning.

Fuel (vegetation, woody debris), weather (wind, temperature, humidity) and topography (hills and valleys) determine the potential for a wildfire to start, and once established, dictate how it will burn.

Fuels

Light fuels such as grass and leaves react very quickly to environmental conditions. They become wet and non-flammable very quickly when exposed to precipitation, and also dry out very quickly when exposed to warm, windy conditions. These light fuels must be monitored, as they are a good indicator of the potential for wildfires to occur. If leaves and grass and dead and dry, be aware that wildfires may occur. Heavy accumulations of dead and down natural fuels may result from events such as timber harvesting and storm damage. These accumulations of material may lead to very intense wildfires or problems in suppression related to accessing the fire.

Weather

Seasonal weather patterns are responsible for the spring and fall fire seasons in Ohio, but shorter term weather patterns within these months should be monitored, as well. Just a few days of warm, breezy, dry, conditions in spring and fall can elevate wildfire potential to critical levels because of the effect on fuels as described above. These periods of warm, dry weather in spring and fall provide citizens a window to conduct outdoor activities, including cleaning up yards and burning debris, further complicating the wildfire situation. Wind should be monitored very closely, as high sustained or gusty winds can cause a wildfire to burn at an extremely rapid rate of spread. A high level of wildfire awareness should be taken during warm, dry, windy days in Ohio during spring and fall.

Topography

Fire spreads very quickly uphill due to convective heat transfer. The rolling topography of Guernsey County provides many settings in which wildfires can and have made rapid and intense runs up hillsides. Heavily shaded areas and north slopes will likely be of lower risk to wildfire due to shading from the sun, but in periods of extended warm, dry conditions these areas will likely burn as well. Ridges and open areas exposed to wind and sun, as well as south facing slopes will likely have a higher potential for wildfire due to these environmental conditions.

Monitoring Conditions

Monitoring, observing, and understanding the environmental factors that may lead to increased wildfire activity is key in developing awareness of an escalating wildfire risk situation.

Synopsis of Environmental Conditions for Normal Wildfire Awareness

- Average precipitation throughout the year.
- Normal/Average seasonal weather conditions.
- Not experiencing a period of extended drought.
- Vegetation is green and alive from June through fall.

Synopsis of Environmental Conditions for Increased Wildfire Awareness

- Below normal precipitation.
- Above normal temperatures.
- Low humidity.
- Increase in winds.
- Extended period of drought.
- Abundant dead and dry grass and leaves.
- Increase in available fuels due to timber harvesting or storm damage.
- Increased human outdoor activity and debris burning.

C. WARNING

Generally, increased wildfire danger is an escalating process; that is, certain environmental and weather factors begin trending in certain directions that culminate in overall increased fire danger. Monitoring and tracking these trends allows for warnings or notices to be issued that communicate the wildfire hazard situation. Following are several warning tools available to emergency responders as well as homeowners that are easily accessible and communicate periods of escalating and elevated wildfire risk.

US Forest Service Wildland Fire Assessment System

Website - <http://www.wfas.net/index.php/fire-danger-rating-fire-potential--danger-32>

This site uses compiled weather data and forecast information to determine an overall wildfire danger rating,

ranging from low to extreme. These fire danger adjectives and rating system is what is used on the Smokey Bear fire danger signs at State and National Forest sites.

Fire Danger Rating and Color Code	Description
Low (L) (Dark Green)	Fuels do not ignite readily from small firebrands although a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or punky wood. Fires in open cured grasslands may burn freely a few hours after rain, but woods fires spread slowly by creeping or smoldering, and burn in irregular fingers. There is little danger of spotting.
Moderate (M) (Light Green or Blue)	Fires can start from most accidental causes, but with the exception of lightning fires in some areas, the number of starts is generally low. Fires in open cured grasslands will burn briskly and spread rapidly on windy days. Timber fires spread slowly to moderately fast. The average fire is of moderate intensity, although heavy concentrations of fuel, especially draped fuel, may burn hot. Short-distance spotting may occur, but is not persistent. Fires are not likely to become serious and control is relatively easy.
High (H) (Yellow)	All fine dead fuels ignite readily and fires start easily from most causes. Unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. High-intensity burning may develop on slopes or in concentrations of fine fuels. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are attacked successfully while small.
Very High (VH) (Orange)	Fires start easily from all causes and, immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning in light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn into heavier fuels.
Extreme (E) (Red)	Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious. Development into high intensity burning will usually be faster and occur from smaller fires than in the very high fire danger class. Direct attack is rarely possible and may be dangerous except immediately after ignition. Fires that develop headway in heavy slash or in conifer stands may be unmanageable while the extreme burning condition lasts. Under these conditions the only effective and safe control action is on the flanks until the weather changes or the fuel supply lessens.

National Weather Service, NOAA

Main website - <http://www.weather.gov/>

NWS Fire Weather website - <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ridge2/fire/>

Although there are many weather websites available, the NWS site is particularly helpful in that inclement weather warning and watches are clearly marked and easy to see on the homepage weather map. This is very useful for quickly determining if Guernsey County or any proximate areas are under Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch.

Red Flag Warning – Issued when critical fire weather conditions are either occurring at the current time or will be occurring within 24 hours. The weather factors leading to a Red Flag Warning include a combination of strong winds, low relative humidity, and warm temperatures that result in explosive fire behavior or growth potential.

- **Criteria for Red Flag Warning in Guernsey County, OH (all criteria must be met for issuance)**
 - Temperature – No minimum / maximum
 - Relative Humidity – RH at 25% or lower
 - Winds – Surface winds at/exceed 15 mph for at least two hours
 - 10-Hour Fuel Moisture – 10-hour fuel moisture at 8% or less and expected to remain so for 2 or more days

Fire Weather Watch - Issued up to 72 hours before critical fire weather conditions are expected to occur.

D. NOTIFICATION

A person(s) discovering a wildfire should IMMEDIATELY initiate a warning to 911 or to the fire department of responsibility. The Guernsey County 911 Dispatch Center will then notify

appropriate emergency responders.

If a member of the public encounters a wildfire, extreme caution should be used. The safest course of action is to leave the area in which the wildfire is burning. Individuals who attempt to suppress a wildfire without appropriate training and personal protective equipment incur a tremendous safety risk. Suppression of wildfires should be left to trained and equipped responders.

E. EVACUATION

When notified by appropriate officials that an evacuation of all or a portion of Guernsey County is possible, recommended, or necessary due to wildfire activity, the Guernsey County Emergency Management Agency in cooperation with any and all appropriate other bodies will initiate appropriate procedures for activating evacuations within Guernsey County.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

1. Guernsey County Fire Departments

- Monitor wildfire weather conditions during the spring and fall each year.
- Keep vigilant and ready during periods of elevated wildfire danger (warm, windy, dry conditions)
- Increase community wildfire awareness, preparedness, and education through outreach and education efforts to the best of their ability.
- Promote wildfire home safety principles such as defensible space and assist community residents as appropriate in implementing wildfire safety measures to the best of their ability.
- Leverage Firewise Ohio grants from the Ohio Division of Forestry to support fire preparedness efforts to the best of their ability.
- Conduct wildfire suppression in a safe, efficient, and effective manner as described in the local fire department operating procedures or equivalent.
- Ensure that all firefighters who intend to respond to fires have appropriate wildfire suppression training.

2. Guernsey County Emergency Management Agency

- Work within all operating procedures established by the Guernsey County EMA.
- Support community wildfire preparedness and education projects throughout Guernsey County.

3. ODNR Division of Forestry

- Work within all operating procedures established by the ODNR Division of Forestry
- Actively promote wildfire awareness, preparedness, and education within Guernsey County.
- Cooperate with Guernsey County Fire Departments on community outreach and education events.
- Support wildfire fuel reduction projects within designated areas of ODNR properties through prescribed burning and mechanical treatment, when applicable.
- Communicate frequently with Guernsey County Fire Departments during periods of elevated wildfire danger.
- Support Guernsey County Fire Departments through Firewise Hazard Mitigation grant funds.
- Provide basic wildfire suppression training to Guernsey County Fire Departments.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

Copies of the plan will be available for inspection at the following locations:

Guernsey County EMA Office
ODNR Forestry Central Office, Columbus
ODNR Forestry Southern District Office, Chillicothe

VI. AUTHORITIES and LAWS

Ohio Revised Code 5502.271

Establishes a countywide Emergency Management Agency in Guernsey County through the Board of County Commissioners with all cities, villages and townships participating.

Ohio Revised Code 1503.18

Addresses the legal issues regarding kindled fires in Ohio and is enforced by the Ohio Division of Forestry. It needs to be noted that local fire departments and/or townships may have specific ordinances in place that govern when and where citizens may burn brush and debris.

Community members should always consult with the local fire department prior to burning in order to fully understand all regulations and ordinances that may be in place.

1503.18 Kindled fires - TEXT

(A) No person shall kindle a fire upon public land without the written permission of the forest-fire warden having jurisdiction or on land of another without the written permission of the owner or his agent.

(B) No person shall kindle or authorize another to kindle a fire in or near any woodland, brushland, or land containing tree growth or in any place from which the fire is likely to escape, unless all leaves, grass, wood, and inflammable material surrounding the place where the fire is kindled have first been removed to a safe distance and all other reasonable precautions have been taken to prevent its escape from control. No fire shall be left until extinguished or safely covered.

(C) Excepting fires kindled in a plowed field, garden, or public highway at a distance of not less than two hundred feet from any woodland, brushland, or field containing dry grass or other inflammable material, no person shall kindle or authorize another to kindle a fire in the open air, outside the limits of any municipal corporation or land controlled by any railroad company, for the purpose of burning wood, brush, weeds, grass, or rubbish of any kind between the hours of six a.m. and six p.m. during the months of March, April, May, October, and November in any year. The chief of the division of forestry may expand the times and places for kindling fires if the chief gives notice by publishing one notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected or giving written authorization to the affected person.

(D) The times and places for kindling fires established under division (C) of this section may be restricted or eliminated by executive order of the governor if environmental conditions so warrant.

(E) Fires kindled by improperly disposing of a lighted match, cigar, or other burning or glowing substance are kindled fires within the meaning of this section.

Effective Date: 02-11-1988

Ohio Administrative Code 3745-19

Addresses the legal issues regarding open burning standards in Ohio and is enforced by the Ohio EPA. It needs to be noted that local fire departments and/or townships may have specific ordinances in place that govern when and where citizens may burn brush and debris.

Community members should always consult with the local fire department prior to burning in order to fully understand all regulations and ordinances that may be in place.

3745-19 Open Burning Standards – TEXT

Chapter 3745-19 Open Burning Standards

(A) “Agricultural waste” means any waste material generated by crop, horticultural, or livestock production practices, and includes such items as woody debris and plant matter from stream flooding, bags, cartons, structural materials, and landscape wastes that are generated in agricultural activities, but does not include land clearing waste; buildings (including dismantled/fallen barns); garbage; dead animals; animal waste; motor vehicles and parts thereof; nor economic poisons and containers thereof, unless the manufacturer has identified open burning as a safe disposal procedure.

(B) “Economic poisons” include but are not restricted to pesticides such as insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, miticides, nematocides and fumigants; herbicides; seed disinfectants; and defoliants.

(C) “Emergency burning” means the burning of clean wood waste or deceased animals caused by a natural disaster or an uncontrolled event such as the following:

- (1) A tornado.
- (2) High winds.
- (3) An earthquake.
- (4) An explosion.
- (5) A flood.
- (6) A hail storm, a rain storm, or an ice storm.

(D) “Garbage” means any waste material resulting from the handling, processing, preparation, cooking and consumption of food or food products.

(E) “Inhabited building” means any inhabited private dwelling house and any public structure which may be used as a place of resort, assembly, education, entertainment, lodging, trade, manufacture, repair, storage, traffic, or occupancy by the public. Examples would include, but are not limited to, highway rest stops, restaurants, motels, hotels and gas stations.

(F) “Landscape waste” means any plant waste material, except garbage, including trees, tree trimmings, branches, stumps, brush, weeds, leaves, grass, shrubbery, yard trimmings, and crop residues.

(G) “Land clearing waste” means plant waste material which is removed from land, including plant waste material removed from stream banks during projects involving more than one property owner, for the purpose of rendering the land useful for residential, commercial, or industrial development. Land clearing waste also includes the plant waste material generated during the clearing of land for new agricultural development.

(H) “Ohio EPA” means the Ohio environmental protection agency director or agencies delegated authority by the director of the Ohio environmental protection agency pursuant to section [3704.03](#) of the Revised Code or the chief of any Ohio environmental protection agency district office.

(I) “Open burning” means the burning of any materials wherein air contaminants resulting from combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without passing through a stack or chimney. Open burning includes the burning of any refuse or salvageable material in any

device not subject to or designed specifically to comply with the requirements of rule [3745-17-09](#) or [3745-17-10](#) of the Administrative Code.

(J) “Residential waste” means any waste material, including landscape waste, generated on the property of a one-, two- or three-family residence as a result of residential activities, but not including garbage, rubber, grease, asphalt, liquid petroleum products, or plastics.

(K) “Restricted area” means the following:

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (K)(2) of this rule, the area within the boundary of any municipal corporation established in accordance with the provisions of Title 7 of the Revised Code, plus a zone extending one thousand feet beyond the boundaries of any such municipal corporation having a population of one thousand to ten thousand persons and a zone extending one mile beyond any such municipal corporation having a population of ten thousand persons or more according to the latest federal census.

(2) “Restricted area” shall not include any municipal corporation the territory of which is located on an island in Lake Erie except that, during the yearly period between Memorial Day and Labor Day, any such municipal corporation shall be required to comply with the requirements of rule [3745-19-03](#) of the Administrative Code.

(L) “Unrestricted area” means all areas outside the boundaries of a restricted area as defined in paragraph (K) of this rule.

(M) Referenced materials. This chapter includes references to certain matter or materials. The text of the referenced materials is not included in the rules contained in this chapter. Information on the availability of the referenced materials as well as the date of, and/or the particular edition or version of the material is included in this rule. For materials subject to change, only the specific versions specified in this rule are referenced. Material is referenced as it exists on the effective date of this rule. Except for subsequent annual publication of existing (unmodified) Code of Federal Regulation compilations, any amendment or revision to a referenced document is not applicable unless and until this rule has been amended to specify the new dates.

(1) Availability. The referenced materials are available as follows:

National fire protection association. Information on the national protection association codes may be obtained by contacting the association at 1 Batterymarch park, Quincy, Massachusetts 02169-7471, 617-770-3000. Codes may be ordered www.nfpa.org/catalog/home/index.asp [File Link Not Available]. Copies of the code exist or are available at most public libraries and “The State Library of Ohio.”

(2) Referenced materials.

NFPA publication 1403; “Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, Chapter 4, Acquired Structures;” published April 30, 2007.

Effective: 05/27/2012

R.C. [119.032](#) review dates: 01/30/2012 and 05/27/2017

Promulgated Under: [119.03](#)

Statutory Authority: [3704.03](#) (E)

Rule Amplifies: [3704.03](#)(A), [3704.03](#) (E)

Prior Effective Dates: 6/21/76, 10/30/87, 12/20/88, 11/27/00, 07/07/06

[3745-19-02 Relations to other prohibitions.](#)

(A) Notwithstanding any provision in this chapter, no open burning shall be conducted in an area where an air alert, warning, or emergency under Chapter 3745-25 of the Administrative Code is in effect.

(B) No provisions of this chapter, permitting open burning, and no permission to open burn granted by the Ohio EPA, shall exempt any person from compliance with any section of the Revised Code, or any regulation of any state department, or any local ordinance or regulation dealing with open burning.

Effective: 05/27/2012

R.C. [119.032](#) review dates: 01/30/2012 and 05/27/2017

Promulgated Under: [119.03](#)

Statutory Authority: [3704.03](#) (E)

Rule Amplifies: [3704.03](#)(A), [3704.03](#) (E)

Prior Effective Dates: 9/21/73, 10/20/87, 07/07/2006

[3745-19-03 Open burning in restricted areas.](#)

[Comment: For dates of non-regulatory government publications, publications of recognized organizations and associations, federal rules, and federal statutory provisions referenced in this rule, see paragraph (M) of rule [3745-19-01](#) of the Administrative Code titled "Referenced materials."]

(A) No person or property owner shall cause or allow open burning in a restricted area except as provided in paragraphs (B) to (D) of this rule or in section 3704.11 of the Revised Code.

(B) Open burning shall be allowed for the following purposes without notification to or permission from the Ohio EPA:

(1) Heating tar, welding, acetylene torches, highway safety flares, heating for warmth of outdoor workers and strikers, smudge pots and similar occupational needs.

(2) Bonfires, campfires and outdoor fireplace equipment, whether for cooking food for human consumption, pleasure, religious, ceremonial, warmth, recreational, or similar purposes, if the following conditions are met:

(a) They are fueled with clean seasoned firewood, natural gas or equivalent, or any clean burning fuel with emissions that are equivalent to or lower than those created from the burning of seasoned firewood;

(b) They are not used for waste disposal purposes; and

(c) They shall have a total fuel area of three feet or less in diameter and two feet or less in height.

(3) Disposal of hazardous explosive materials, military munitions or explosive devices that require immediate action to prevent endangerment of human health, public safety, property or the environment and that are excluded from the requirement to obtain a hazardous waste permit pursuant to paragraph (D)(1)(d) of rule [3745-50-45](#) of the Administrative Code.

(4) Recognized training in the use of fire extinguishers for commercial or industrial fire prevention.

(5) Fires set at the direction of federal, state, and local law enforcement officials for the purpose of destruction of cannabis sativa (marijuana) plant vegetation, processed marijuana material and/or other drugs seized by federal, state, or local law enforcement officials.

Fires allowed by paragraphs (B)(1), (B)(2) and (B)(4) of this rule shall not be used for waste disposal purposes and shall be of minimum size sufficient for their intended purpose; the fuel shall be chosen to minimize the generation and emission of air contaminants.

(C) Open burning shall be allowed for the following purposes with prior notification to the Ohio EPA in accordance with paragraph (B) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code:

(1) Prevention or control of disease or pests, with written or oral verification to the Ohio EPA from the Ohio department of health or local health department, the centers for disease control and prevention, cooperative extension service, Ohio department of agriculture, or United States department of agriculture, that open burning is the only appropriate disposal method.

(2) Bonfires or campfires used for ceremonial purposes that do not meet the requirements of paragraph (B)(2) of this rule, provided the following conditions are met:

(a) They have a total fuel area no greater than five feet in diameter by five feet in height and burn no longer than three hours;

(b) They are not used for waste disposal purposes; and

(c) They are fueled with clean seasoned firewood, natural gas or equivalent, or any clean burning fuel with emissions that are equivalent to or lower than those created from the burning of seasoned firewood.

(3) Disposal of agricultural waste generated on the premises if the following conditions are observed:

(a) The fire is set only when atmospheric conditions will readily dissipate contaminants;

(b) The fire does not create a visibility hazard on the roadways, railroad tracks, or air fields;

(c) The fire is located at a point on the premises no less than one thousand feet from any inhabited building not located on said premises;

(d) The wastes are stacked and dried to provide the best practicable condition for efficient burning; and

(e) No materials are burned which contain rubber, grease, asphalt, liquid petroleum products, plastics or building materials.

(D) Open burning shall be allowed for the following purposes upon receipt of written permission from the Ohio EPA, in accordance with paragraph (A) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code, provided that any conditions specified in the permission are followed:

(1) Disposal of ignitable or explosive materials where the Ohio EPA determines that there is no practical alternate method of disposal, excluding those materials identified in paragraph (B)(3) of this rule;

(2) Instruction in methods of fire fighting or for research in the control of fire as recognized by the state fire marshal division of the Ohio department of commerce and the guidelines set forth in the national fire protection association's (NFPA) publication 1403: "Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, Chapter 4, Acquired Structures," provided that the application required in paragraph (A)(1) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code is submitted by the commercial or public entity responsible for the instruction;

(3) In emergency or other extraordinary circumstances for any purpose determined to be necessary by the director and, if required, performed as identified in the appendix to this rule. If deemed necessary, the open burning may be authorized with prior oral approval by the director followed by the issuance of a written permission to open burn within seven working days of the oral approval;

(4) Recognized horticultural, silvicultural (forestry), range, or wildlife management practices; and

(5) Fires and/or pyrotechnic effects, for purposes other than waste disposal, set as part of commercial film-making or video production activities for motion pictures and television.

[Click to view Appendix](#)

Effective: 05/27/2012

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Prior Effective Dates: 6/21/76, 10/30/87, 12/20/88, 11/27/00, 07/07/06

[3745-19-04 Open burning in unrestricted areas.](#)

[Comment: For dates of non-regulatory government publications, publications of recognized organizations and associations, federal rules, and federal statutory provisions referenced in this rule, see paragraph (M) of rule [3745-19-01](#) of the Administrative Code titled "Referenced materials."]

(A) No person or property owner shall cause or allow open burning in an unrestricted area except as provided in paragraphs (B) to (D) of this rule or in section [3704.11](#) of the Revised Code.

(B) Open burning shall be allowed for the following purposes without notification to or permission from the Ohio EPA, except as required in paragraph (B)(3)(f) of this rule:

(1) Heating tar, welding, acetylene torches, highway safety flares, heating for warmth of outdoor workers and strikers, smudge pots, and similar occupational needs.

(2) Bonfires, campfires and outdoor fireplace equipment, whether for cooking food for human consumption, pleasure, religious, ceremonial, warmth, recreational, or similar purposes, if the following conditions are met:

(a) They are fueled with clean seasoned firewood, natural gas or equivalent, or any clean burning fuel with emissions that are equivalent to or lower than those created from the burning of seasoned firewood;

(b) They are not used for waste disposal purposes; and

(c) They shall have a total fuel area of three feet or less in diameter and two feet or less in height except when such fire is used for ceremonial purposes it may have a total fuel area no greater than five feet in diameter and five feet in height, if the ceremonial fire burns no longer than three hours.

(3) Disposal of residential waste or agricultural waste generated on the premises if the following conditions are observed:

(a) The fire is set only when atmospheric conditions will readily dissipate contaminants;

(b) The fire does not create a visibility hazard on the roadways, railroad tracks, or air fields;

(c) The fire is located at a point on the premises no less than one thousand feet from any inhabited building not located on said premises;

(d) The wastes are stacked and dried to provide the best practicable condition for efficient burning; and

- (e) No materials are burned which contain rubber, grease, asphalt, liquid petroleum products, plastics or building materials.
 - (f) Prior notification to the Ohio EPA in accordance with paragraph (B) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code shall be required for the disposal of agricultural waste if the size of waste pile exceeds twenty feet in diameter by ten feet in height (or four thousand cubic feet) and for residential waste if the size of the waste pile exceeds ten feet by ten feet by ten feet (or one thousand cubic feet).
 - (4) Disposal of hazardous explosive materials, military munitions or explosive devices that require immediate action to prevent endangerment of human health, public safety, property or the environment and that are excluded from the requirement to obtain a hazardous waste permit pursuant to paragraph (D)(1)(d) of rule [3745-50-45](#) of the Administrative Code.
 - (5) Recognized training in the use of fire extinguishers for commercial or industrial fire prevention.
 - (6) Fires set at the direction of federal, state, and local law enforcement officials for the purpose of destruction of cannabis sativa (marijuana) plant vegetation, processed marijuana material and/or other drugs seized by federal, state, or local law enforcement officials.
- Fires allowed by paragraphs (B)(1), (B)(2) and (B)(5) of this rule shall not be used for waste disposal purposes, and shall be of the minimum size sufficient for their intended purpose; the fuel shall be chosen to minimize the generation and emission of air contaminants.
- (C) Open burning shall be allowed for the following purposes upon receipt of written permission from the Ohio EPA, in accordance with paragraph (A) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code, provided that any conditions specified in the permission are followed:
- (1) Disposal of ignitable or explosive materials where the Ohio EPA determines that there is no practical alternate method of disposal, excluding those materials identified in paragraph (B)(4) of this rule;
 - (2) Instruction in methods of fire fighting or for research in the control of fire as recognized by the state fire marshal division of the Ohio department of commerce and the guidelines set forth in the national fire protection association's (NFPA) publication 1403: "Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, Chapter 4, Acquired Structures," provided that the application required in paragraph (A)(1) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code is submitted by the commercial or public entity responsible for the instruction;
 - (3) In emergency or other extraordinary circumstances for any purpose determined to be necessary by the director and, if required, performed as identified in the appendix to rule [3745-19-03](#) of the Administrative Code. If deemed necessary, the open burning may be authorized with prior oral approval by the director followed by the issuance of a written permission to open burn within seven working days of the oral approval;
 - (4) Disposal of land clearing waste generated on the premises if the following conditions are observed:
 - (a) The fire is set only when atmospheric conditions will readily dissipate contaminants;
 - (b) The fire does not create a visibility hazard on roadways, railroad tracks, or air fields;
 - (c) The fire is located at a point on the premises no less than one thousand feet from any inhabited building not located on said premises; and
 - (d) An air curtain destructor or other device or method determined by the director to be at least as effective is used to curtail release of air contaminants;
 - (5) Recognized horticultural, silvicultural (forestry), range, or wildlife management practices; and
 - (6) Fires and/or pyrotechnic effects, for purposes other than waste disposal, set as part of commercial film-making or video production activities for motion pictures and television.

(D) Open burning shall be allowed, with prior notification to the Ohio EPA in accordance with paragraph (B) of rule [3745-19-05](#) of the Administrative Code; for the purpose of prevention or control of disease or pests, with written or oral verification to the Ohio EPA from the Ohio department of health or local health department, the centers for disease control and prevention, cooperative extension service, Ohio department of agriculture, or United States department of agriculture, that open burning is the only appropriate disposal method.

Effective: 05/27/2012

R.C. [119.032](#) review dates: 01/30/2012 and 05/27/2017

Promulgated Under: [119.03](#)

Statutory Authority: [3704.03](#) (E)

Rule Amplifies: [3704.03](#)(A), [3704.03](#) (E)

Prior Effective Dates: 6/21/76, 10/30/87, 12/20/98, 11/27/00, 07/07/2006

[3745-19-05 Permission to individuals and notification to the Ohio EPA.](#)

(A) Permission:

(1) An application for permission to open burn shall be submitted in writing to Ohio EPA. The applicant shall allow Ohio EPA at least ten working days to review the permit. Applicant may proceed with burn upon receipt of written permission from Ohio EPA. Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays shall not be considered working days. The application shall be in such form and contain such information as required by the Ohio EPA.

(2) Except as provided in paragraphs (A)(6) and (A)(7) of this rule, such applications shall contain, a minimum, information regarding:

(a) The purpose of the proposed burning;

(b) The quantity or acreage and the nature of the materials to be burned;

(c) The date or dates when such burning will take place;

(d) The location of the burning site, including a map showing distances to residences, populated areas, roadways, air fields, and other pertinent landmarks; and

(e) The methods or actions which will be taken to reduce the emissions of air contaminants.

(3) Permission to open burn shall not be granted unless the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Ohio EPA that open burning is necessary to the public interest; will be conducted in a time, place, and manner as to minimize the emission of air contaminants, when atmospheric conditions are appropriate; and will have no serious detrimental effect upon adjacent properties or the occupants thereof. The Ohio EPA may impose such conditions as may be necessary to accomplish the purpose of this chapter.

(4) Except as provided in paragraph (A)(6) of this rule, permission to open burn must be obtained for each specific project. In emergencies where public health or environmental quality will be seriously threatened by delay while written permission is sought, the fire may be set with oral permission of the Ohio EPA.

(5) Violations of any of the conditions set forth by the Ohio EPA in granting permission to open burn shall be grounds for revocation of such permission and refusal to grant future permission, as well as for the imposition of other sanctions provided by law.

(6) The Ohio department of commerce, division of state fire marshal, may request permission to open burn on an annual basis for the purpose of training firefighters on pre-flashover conditions using the Ohio fire academy's mobile training laboratory at either the

academy or at other training sites in Ohio. The annual application required pursuant to paragraph (A)(1) of this rule shall contain information as required in paragraph (A)(2) of this rule, except the information required in paragraphs (A)(2)(c) and (A)(2)(d) of this rule need not be provided unless it is available at the time of submittal of the application. The academy shall contact the appropriate Ohio EPA district office or local air agency at least five working days before each training session of the date or dates when the training session will take place and its location. Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays shall not be considered working days.

(7) For open burning defined under paragraph (D)(2) of rule [3745-19-03](#) and paragraph (C)(2) of rule [3745-19-04](#) of the Administrative Code, permission to open burn shall not be granted unless the applicant provides proof of written notice of intent to demolish received by the appropriate Ohio EPA field office in accordance with rule [3745-20-03](#) of the Administrative Code.

(B) Notification:

(1) Notification shall be submitted in writing at least ten working days before the fire is to be set. Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays shall not be considered working days. It shall be in such form and contain such information as shall be required by the Ohio EPA.

(2) Such notification shall inform the Ohio EPA regarding:

- (a) The purpose of the proposed burning;
- (b) The nature and quantities of materials to be burned;
- (c) The date or dates when such burning will take place; and
- (d) The location of the burning site.

(3) The Ohio EPA, after receiving notification, may determine that the open burning is not allowed under this chapter and the Ohio EPA shall notify the applicant to this effect.

Effective: 05/27/2012

R.C. [119.032](#) review dates: 01/30/2012 and 05/27/2017

Promulgated Under: [119.03](#)

Statutory Authority: [3704.03](#) (E)

Rule Amplifies: [3704.03](#)(A), [3704.03](#) (E)

Prior Effective Dates: 9/21/73, 11/30/87, 11/27/00, 07/07/2006

[3745-19-06 Open burning unilateral order.](#)

(A) The director may assess and collect administrative penalties from any person who violates any of the rules in this chapter. Through unilateral orders, the director may assess a violator not more than two hundred fifty dollars per day for each separate violation of the rules in this chapter for open burning of residential waste and not more than one thousand dollars per day for each separate violation of the rules in this chapter for open burning of all wastes that are not residential waste. A separate violation is assessed for each day (twenty-four hour period) or portion of a day the violation occurs.

(B) The director's authority under paragraph (A) of this rule is in addition to, and not in limitation of, the director's authority under

section [3704.06](#) of the Revised Code to request the attorney general to initiate legal action to seek penalties of not more than twenty-five thousand dollars for each day of each violation for the violation of rules in this chapter.

Effective: 05/27/2012

R.C. [119.032](#) review dates: 01/30/2012 and 05/27/2017

Promulgated Under: [119.03](#)

Statutory Authority: [3704.03](#) (E)

Rule Amplifies: [3704.03](#)(A), [3704.03](#) (E)

Prior Effective Dates: 07/07/2006

Mutual Aid Agreement(s)

Amongst and between members of the Guernsey County Fire Chiefs' and/or Firefighters' Association allows for cooperation and working together on response and projects that provide benefit to the citizens of the county.

VII. PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AWARENESS

Wildfire prevention is an extremely dynamic process. Communities vary tremendously across the nation and across Ohio in local perceptions, beliefs, culture issues, and needs. To be successful and effective, the fire prevention strategies and tactics implemented should consider and reflect these local values. Fire prevention programs need to be molded to fit the community. Local fire department participation is vital in creating a program that is locally accepted and pertinent to the area.

In wildfire prevention, there are several steps that have to be reached in sequence in order to produce a successful campaign:

- Awareness
- Education
- Prevention
- Mitigation

Each step builds upon its precursor, with the end result being a holistic, well-rounded program. Upon completion of the program, local homeowners will be able to recognize potential hazards or threats, and be cognizant of how to alleviate these hazards and perform maintenance to keep the hazards from recurring. The participating fire departments have an overall goal of increased life/home/property safety in terms of wildfire, area wide. The only way that this can happen is to first raise wildfire awareness, area wide. Fire departments have the option to perform various awareness projects to raise fire awareness:

- Homeowner contacts
- FD Open houses
- School programs
- Newspaper articles
- Radio spots
- Television spots
- Public events (fairs, parades, etc.)
- Smokey Bear appearances
- Etc...

Following awareness efforts, community members should have a better feeling for the fact that wildfires do occur in Guernsey County, and they will continue to occur in the future. Fire departments should build toward educational efforts by getting more in depth about fire dynamics, homeowner responsibility regarding wildfire, defensible space, etc. Educational efforts can be performed at similar functions that awareness efforts are made at, as well as at/through:

- Homeowner contacts
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Training sessions
- School programs
- Mailings
- Flyers

Educational efforts should equip citizens with the ability to understand that fires burn differently depending on fuel type, slope, aspect, weather, and other factors. In Guernsey County, emphasis should be put on the potential for increased fire intensity and size due to increased fuel loadings. Community members need to realize that the local area is in a condition that could result in fires of uncharacteristic capacity. Another important point to bring to light in educational efforts is homeowner / shared responsibility. This is the concept that there are simple steps that homeowners can take to alleviate many hazards in the WUI. ODNr Forestry can supply various and assorted brochures, handouts and materials that outline some of these steps. These materials can be provided to fire departments for local use at no cost. Topics such as prescribed fire and debris burning regulations should be addressed, as well. The next step, prevention, partially reverts back to awareness methods. Prevention efforts are targeted at large groups of people, and can be conducted on large-scale levels. Many prevention efforts serve as reminders and refreshers to topics that folks are mindful of, but may have gotten lackadaisical about. Some effective prevention measures include:

- Homeowner contacts
- Billboards
- Signage
- Flyers
- School programs
- Newspaper spots
- Radio spots

The measure of success of wildfire awareness/education/prevention programs are the actions taken by community members to put hazard mitigation techniques to use. Assistance may be provided to homeowners, primarily elderly and/or disabled, by fire department personnel in conducting mitigation activities. Examples of mitigation are creating defensible space, trimming surrounding vegetation 30 feet back from the home, raking up leaves from around the home, repairing access ways to accommodate heavy trucks, and ensuring that clear and visible signage is on roads and addresses.

These steps are an ongoing and continual process. Wildfire prevention and education is very opportunistic – if an event occurs that is a "teachable moment" it needs to be capitalized upon. These could include a local wildfire event, National Fire Prevention Week, a community wide event with lots of attendees, Red Flag fire danger days, etc. Large-scale efforts need to be executed at least biannually and correspond with Fall and Spring fire season for continuing success.

ODNR Forestry offers assistance in developing and implementing local awareness / prevention / education programs. These programs can be geared to both school kids and adults – instituting a variety of fire education programs is encouraged, as it enables for a broader audience to be reached. Firewise Hazard Mitigation grants are available to local fire departments through the Ohio Division of Forestry. Firewise grant funds can be used for wildfire prevention, preparedness, mitigation, and education projects. The ODNR Division of Forestry recommends that all of the fire departments of Guernsey County develop active Firewise programs in their communities. Several of the Guernsey County FDs have implemented Firewise strategies within their respective fire districts and have enjoyed success in enhanced community safety.

VIII. PLAN MAINTENANCE

This plan will be reviewed by the Ohio Division of Forestry and Guernsey County EMA every four years. Any proposed changes will be presented to Guernsey County Fire Departments for comment prior to inclusion in the plan. All minor changes such as telephone numbers or addresses will be made as they are discovered. Any such changes should be immediately sent to all holders of plan copies.

APPENDIX A

DEFENSIBLE SPACE GUIDELINES

Defensible space is an area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are trimmed, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire towards the structure. Defensible space also provides room and space for firefighters to protect a structure from an oncoming wildfire. Furthermore, having defensible space reduces the chance of a structure fire moving from the building to the surrounding vegetation and starting a wildfire. A structure is much more likely to withstand a wildfire if grasses, brush, trees and other common forest fuels are managed to reduce a fire's intensity.

Creating an effective defensible space involves developing a series of management zones in which different vegetation treatment techniques are used. It is important to develop defensible space around each building on your property. Include detached garages, storage buildings, barns and other structures in your defensible space plan.

The actual design and development of your defensible space depends on several factors:

- size and shape of buildings
- materials used in their construction
- slope of the ground on which the structures are built
- surrounding topography
- sizes and types of vegetation on your property

Consider the following key guidelines:

From the edge of structure to 30 feet out:

Keep grass cut short. Tall grass will quickly carry fire to your house. Keeping grass maintained is particularly important during the fall and in early spring, when grasses are dead, dry, or dormant. Maintenance of the grassy areas around your home is critical to safety.

Rake up dead leaves. Dead, dry leaves are very flammable and should be removed from the defensible space area. When leaves catch on fire, they commonly blow around and start additional smaller fires where they land. Making sure that leaves are cleared out from around structures will help keep fire at a distance.

Remove ladder fuels.

Ladder fuels are defined as vegetation, bushes, shrubs, and low hanging branches that facilitate vertical development of fires, creating larger flames and more intense fires. In Ohio most fires burn across the surface of the ground. Removing ladder fuels ensure that these fires stay on the surface and keep flames smaller.

Keep gutters and roof clear of debris.

If a fire ignites on the roof of a structure, chances of saving it are very low. Removing accumulations of dead leaves, sticks, and twigs from the roof and gutters eliminates a fuel source for blowing embers and flaming leaves to ignite.

From 30 feet to 100 feet out:

Continue removing ladder fuels and heavy accumulations of vegetation

When wildfire burns in shrubs such as honeysuckle, greenbrier, or multiflora rose, very large, intense flames and damaging heat can result. Continuing ladder fuel reduction to a distance of 100 feet from the home will help to keep flames minimized. Removing or scattering large piles of dead wood and material will also help decrease fire intensity.

Defensible Space Checklist

Trees and shrubs are properly thinned and pruned within the defensible space. Slash from the thinning is disposed of.

- ✓ Roof and gutters are clear of debris.
- ✓ Branches overhanging the roof and chimney are removed.
- ✓ Chimney screens are in place and in good condition.
- ✓ Grass and weeds are mowed to a low height.
- ✓ An outdoor water supply is available, complete with a hose and nozzle that can reach all parts of the house.
- ✓ Fire extinguishers are checked and in working condition.
- ✓ The driveway is wide enough. The clearance of trees and branches is adequate for fire and emergency equipment.
(Check with your local fire department.)
- ✓ Road signs and your name and house number are posted and easily visible.
- ✓ There is an easily accessible tool storage area with rakes, hoes, axes and shovels for use in case of fire.
- ✓ You have practiced family fire drills and your fire evacuation plan.
- ✓ Your escape routes, meeting points and other details are known and understood by all family members.
- ✓ Attic, roof, eaves and foundation vents are screened and in good condition. Stilt foundations and decks are enclosed, screened or walled up.
- ✓ Trash and debris accumulations are removed from the defensible space.

APPENDIX B
Guernsey County Map featuring ODNR Lands

