

DeSales University	Occupational Safety & Health Department Policies and Procedures
Title: Outdoor Recreational Fires	Issue Date: September 30, 2011 Revision Date: January 30, 2025

1.0 **Policy Statement**

Fire by its nature is an unpredictable entity; outdoor fire presents a significant threat of injury due to changing weather conditions, accidents, misuse, or negligence. The Outdoor Recreational Fire safety policy was designed to protect lives and property at DeSales University. By being proactive about how we handle fire on our campus we will ensure the safety and well-being of our campus community. This document is designed to comply with the International Fire Code, Section 307 Open Burning, Recreational Fires, and Portable Outdoor Fireplaces.

2.0 **Purpose**

To establish a uniform policy with procedures for the safe use of outdoor recreational fires.

3.0 **Scope**

This policy applies to all outdoor recreational fires on campus.

4.0 **Definitions**

Barbecues – An event at which individuals eat food cooked outside on an outdoor LP- gas or charcoal burning open flame appliance designed specifically for cooking.

Bonfire - An outdoor wood fueled fire utilized for ceremonial purposes.

Open burning – Includes, but is not limited to, setting materials on fire within an enclosure, causing combustible products to exhaust directly into the ambient air.

Portable Outdoor Fireplace - A portable, outdoor, solid-fuel-burning fireplace that may be constructed of steel, concrete, clay, or other noncombustible material. A portable outdoor fireplace may be open in design or may be equipped with a small hearth opening and a short chimney or chimney opening in the top.

Outdoor fireplace - A hand built or commercially manufactured appliance of brick, stone, or metal for an open fire.

Recreational fires - An outdoor fire used for pleasure, recreation, religious, ceremonial, cooking, warmth or similar purpose. Also includes open flames used in a theatrical production.

5.0 **Environmental Compliance**

Upper Saucon Township Ordinance 141 section 317.B and provisions of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA-DEP) regulations apply to open burning. UST Ordinance 141 and PA-DEP Title V of the Air Pollution Control Act prohibits open burning when there is a reasonable expectation that visible emissions from burning and/or malodorous air contaminants will pass beyond the property boundaries.

The burning of unseasoned wood, chemically treated or painted/stained wood, leaves, branches, paper, plastic, rubber, gasoline, kerosene, manure and trash are strictly prohibited on DeSales University property.

Only commercially available fire-starting liquids are allowed when starting a charcoal fire used for a barbeque.

6.0 Policy and Procedure

6.1 Barbecue Grills & Outdoor Cooking Equipment

This section applies only to cooking with charcoal or LP gas.

- Grills must be at least 15 feet from any combustible materials.
- Grills must be at least 10 feet from a building and must be kept at least 50 feet from any building openings such as doors or windows.
- Grills must be used outside of buildings and tents to prevent dangerous carbon monoxide build-up inside the space.
- Only commercial charcoal lighter fluids can be used to ignite fire. Lighter fluids should only be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions listed on the label of the container.
- All fires or hot coals must be completely extinguished when event is over. Grills must be cleaned, and ashes must be disposed of in a safe manner. Coals and ashes should not be dumped on the ground. They must be disposed of in a metal trash receptacle.

6.2 Portable Outdoor Fireplaces (Fire Pits)

- Fire pits and chimeneas are prohibited on University property except for campus provided portable fire pits.
- Portable fire pits are allowed to be used in the mall near Dorothy Day Student Union only.
- Portable fire pits should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Portable fire pits should not be operated within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material, including manhole covers.
- In order to reserve a portable fire pit for an approved campus event, the request form (Attachment A) must be filled out, signed by the Faculty/Staff advisor, and returned to Conference Services.
- Portable fire pits should be constantly attended by a trained Fire Pit Specialist until the fire is extinguished.
- At the end of the event, the fire must be extinguished using the provided water source.
- Only one (1) Duraflame Fire log (or similar) should be used at a time in each fire pit. If the event will last longer than one (1) log, additional will be provided.
- A fire extinguisher must be available for immediate utilization. Fire extinguishers should only be used in the event of an emergency, and not for putting out the fire at the end of the event.
- For an approved event, Campus Environment will provide the following:
 - Portable fire pit set up at the approved location
 - Duraflame Fire logs (or similar)
 - Water Bucket

- Long neck style lighter
 - Access to water for extinguishing the fire at the end of the event
- The following information will be provided with the event confirmation (Attachment B):
 - Location of the water source
 - Location of the nearest fire extinguisher
 - Fire extinguisher use instructions
- Even if the fire pit event is approved, cancellation may be required if a burn ban is in effect at the time of the event.
- If this policy is not followed, future fire pit events by the group will not be approved.
- Fire pit hours are limited to 9:00am-9:00pm unless additional hours are approved by the Student Engagement and Leadership office.

7.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updates will be made as necessary.

Revision History Log		
Reviewed and Updated by:	Date:	Changes Made:
Kayleigh Dillman, Environmental Health & Safety Assistant	1/30/2025	Added Revision History Log to end of procedure.