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## MOFD announces an early burn ban

By Vera Kochan



Outdoor fireplaces fall under the burn ban category Photo courtesy MOFD

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District issued a public announcement from the fire marshal's office effective April 12 instituting a burn ban for all area's under MOFD's jurisdiction. This comes as a result of extremely dry conditions and lower than average rainfall this past season and will remain in effect until the onset of seasonal rains in the fall. The ban is in accordance with MOFD Ordinance 20-03, which "sets forth the requirements and/or restrictions pertaining to banning open burning and recreational fires during high fire season and providing for enforcement options and penalties."

The ordinance specifies that improperly extinguished recreational fires could potentially turn into an uncontrolled fire that threatens to ignite nearby wildland and structures. Additionally, high winds and low fuel moisture could add to an already dangerous situation. The ordinance also states that any person who fails to

comply with the order may be subject to a fine of \$500 per each day of violation.

Basically, a burn ban involves all forms of open flames such as bonfires, portable outdoor fireplaces, ceremonial fires, recreational fires and campfires (on public and private land). The exceptions are UL or ASMI listed manufactured GAS (LPG or NG) outdoor flame devices and charcoal grills. Also acceptable are wood pellet fuel based barbecue/smokers (such as Traeger). These pellet burning devices contain heat and ash which fully consume the pellets with no super-heated particles remaining that could start a fire after disposal.

MOFD does make exceptions to the burn ban by issuing a permit regarding special events or commercial cooking. In these instances, an inspection will be conducted and a permit outlining specific operating guidelines will be issued. For permit information contact the Fire Marshal's office at (925) 258-4513.

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