

TOWN OF PALMER LAKE, COLORADO

ORDINANCE NO. 18-2024

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 8.28 REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF FIRE RESTRICTIONS, ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM TO ISSUE BURN PERMITS, AND ESTABLISHING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Town of Palmer Lake, Colorado, pursuant to Colorado statute and the Palmer Lake Municipal Code, is vested with the authority of administering the affairs of the Town; and

WHEREAS, outdoor burning, fire and smoking restrictions within the Town are governed by Chapter 8.28 of the Palmer Lake Town Code; and

WHEREAS, in consultation with the Fire Chief of the Palmer Lake Fire Department, the Board of Trustees has determined that the provisions of Chapter 8.28 regarding fire restrictions should be revised, that a system should be implemented for issuing outdoor burn permits, and that the penalties for violations should be revised.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE, COLORADO AS FOLLOWS:

1. Chapter 8.28 of the Palmer Lake Town Code is hereby amended as reflected in Exhibit A, attached.
2. Chapter 8.28 shall read in its entirety as set forth in Exhibit B, attached.
3. Severability. If any article, section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is held to be unconstitutional or invalid for any reason such decision shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The Board of Trustees hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance and each part or parts thereof irrespective of the fact that any one part or parts be declared unconstitutional or invalid.
4. Repeal. Existing ordinances or parts of ordinances covering the same matters embraced in this Ordinance are hereby repealed and all ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed except that this repeal shall not affect or prevent the prosecution or punishment of any person for any act done or committed in violation of any ordinance hereby repealed prior to the effective date of this Ordinance.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF PALMER LAKE ON THIS 24th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2024.

ATTEST:

TOWN OF PALMER LAKE, COLORADO



Dawn A. Collins
Town Administrator/Clerk

BY: 

Grant Havenar
Mayor

CHAPTER 8.28. OUTDOOR BURNING, FIRE AND SMOKING RESTRICTIONS

8.28.010. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Annual burn permit means a permit issued by the Palmer Lake Fire Department required for burning slash, limited to natural debris, such as tree limbs, prunings, pine needles, in a barrel or other containment. Before burning, a burn permit must be obtained.

Attendant means an adult 18 years of age or older.

Attended means an attendant is within sight and near proximity to a fire until extinguished in order to timely respond in the event that a spark, flame or ember leaves the container in which the fire is located.

Burn barrel means a large metal drum or container, commonly a 55-gallon steel drum, used for open burning of various materials. Burn barrels are often used to dispose of natural materials like wood, paper, or yard waste in rural areas where other disposal methods may be limited.

Camp lantern means a pressure lamp made to burn kerosene, gasoline, Coleman fuel (white gas) or propane and use one or two mantles to produce an intense white light.

Camp stove means a small portable stove fueled by liquid such as propane for cooking or heating, especially by campers or picnickers.

Combustible means any solid material that will eventually burn if exposed to enough heat for a long enough time such as, without limitation, branches, firewood, and framing lumber.

El Paso County stage 2 fire restrictions means El Paso County stage 2 restrictions as imposed within the unincorporated areas of El Paso County, Colorado, in accordance with El Paso County Ordinance 15-001, as may be amended from time to time.

Extinguish(ed) means no excessive heat, and no visible flames, smoke, or emissions exist or hot embers are present.

Extinguishing materials means a charged hose, a bucket with a minimum of two gallons of water, or a commercial fire extinguisher is nearby such that an attendant can readily access such materials to extinguish a fire.

Fire pit means a commercial container for the purpose of containing combustible and/or flammable materials, embers, flame and sparks of an outdoor fire (recreational fire) to keep the fire from spreading beyond the container.

Fireworks means a pyrotechnic device consisting of combustibles designed to burn or explode for the purpose of generating a loud noise, light, sparks, smoke or projectile propulsion for entertainment or display.

Flammable means any liquid material that can easily catch fire quickly under normal circumstances and with the help of minimal ignition source(s) such as, without limitation, oil, gas, or varnish.

Open burning means a type of open fire for (a) vegetation management that involves the combustion of one or more piles of clean, dry natural vegetative material on an open premises, or on any public street, alley or other land adjacent to such premises, (b) the prescribed burning offence lines or rows, fields, farmlands, rangelands, wild lands, and (c) the burning of trash and debris.

Open fire means an outdoor fire, including but not limited to open burning, recreational fires of all types, the use of explosives, outdoor welding or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame or operating tools that produce flame or sparks, fireworks of all kinds or brands, or any other activity creating combustion or an open flame.

Outdoor commercial gas-fueled fire pit, fire table means a type of fire pit or table that is commercially manufactured and sold as an ornamental structure, the flame of which is fueled by natural gas or propane for outdoor fires, the medium of which is decorative, such as ceramic logs, fire glass, or lava rock, and that does not produce embers or sparks.

Recreational fire means an outdoor fire used for pleasure, religious, ceremonial, warmth or similar purposes, including, but not limited to, campfires, fire pits, warming fires, charcoal grill fires, fires in wood-burning stoves involving the burning of charcoal or clean firewood, as well as outdoor commercial gas-fueled fire pit fires. Outdoor cooking in other than a commercially manufactured appliance designed for the purpose of cooking of food outdoors shall be treated the same as a recreational fire.

Red flag warning means a forecast warning issued by the National Weather Service inclusive of the town to inform area firefighting, land use management agencies, municipalities and the public that conditions are ideal for wildland fire ignition and propagation either currently or within 24 hours.

Spark arrester means a screen covering with holes no greater than one-half inch that is placed on top of a source of and completely encapsulates flames, embers or sparks to prevent such flames, embers or sparks from exiting the container at all times when flames, embers or sparks are present.

Special town fire restrictions means any restrictions imposed in accordance with section 8.28.030(c) of this chapter, which may be in addition to or in lieu of any town fire regulations.

Town stage 1 fire restrictions means the minimum restrictions on burning, fires and outdoor smoking as set forth in this chapter.

Town stage 2 fire restrictions are additional restrictions (to the otherwise permanently applicable town stage 1 fire regulations) placed on outdoor burning, fires and smoking as and whenever in effect, as provided in this chapter.

Town property means all town-owned property to include parks, streets, open space and town facilities and surrounding grounds and includes the water system.

Unadulterated wood means wood that is free of pesticides, fungicides, paint, varnish, glue, resin or other impregnated materials that produce noxious fumes or flames in excess of those that would be produced by wood that was not so impregnated.

Water system shall have the same meaning as the term "water system" as defined in section 13.20.040 of this Code and include any hiking trail or road thereto.

(Ord. No. 15-2018, § 1(8.10.010), 9-13-2018; Ord. No. 1-2021, § 1(8.10.010), 1-28-2021; Ord. No. 10-2021, § 1(8.10.010), 10-14-2021)

8.28.020. Applicability, violations and table of allowable activity.

- (a) It shall be unlawful to engage in any activity within the town in violation of any town fire regulations.
- (b) It shall be unlawful to burn debris without first obtaining a burn permit. Annual permit fee is adopted by resolution by the Board of Trustees.
- (c) It shall be unlawful to engage in any activity within the town in violation of town stage 2 fire restrictions as may be imposed in accordance with section 8.28.030(b).

- (d) It shall be unlawful to engage at any time in any activity within the town, including public, private, state and applicable federal lands, inclusive of the water system, involving outdoor fires, burning or smoking, unless such activity is allowed as set forth in Table 1 of this section and an approved burn permit has been obtained in advance.
- (d) It shall be unlawful to engage in any activity within the town in violation of any special town fire restrictions as may be imposed in accordance with section 8.28.030(c).
- (e) The restrictions and prohibitions in this chapter shall not apply to:
- (1) Any federal, state, or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force, in the performance of an official duty; or
 - (2) Any town sponsored event approved by the board of trustees and permitted by the fire chief at which the fire department is providing oversight of the fire or burning; or
 - (3) Indoor fires, burning or indoor smoking (including within an enclosed motor vehicle or building).
- (f) The following chart outlines allowable and prohibited activities involving outdoor burning, fires and smoking by level of fire restrictions in effect (other than special town fire restrictions which are imposed by separate action in accordance with section 8.28.030(c)):

Table 1

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Town Stage 1 Restrictions</i>	<i>Town Stage 2 Restrictions</i>
Open Burning.	Not allowed.	Not allowed.
Sale, Possession, Use or Display of Fireworks, approved by the Town Fire Chief.	Not allowed. Commercial fireworks displays only allowed if approved by the Town Fire Chief.	Not allowed.
Use of Burning Barrel.	Allowed with caution.	Not allowed.
Use of Camp Stoves and Camp Lanterns.	Allowed (including on wood decks and on town property) if:	Not allowed.
	1. Attended until extinguished.	
	2. Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.	
Open Fire Charcoal Grills for Cooking.	Allowed (including on wood decks and on town property) if:	Not allowed.
	1. Attended until extinguished.	
	2. Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.	
Open Fire Gas Grills for Cooking.	Allowed (including on wood decks and on town property) if: Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.	Allowed (including on wood decks and on town property) if: Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.
Outdoor welding or operation of acetylene or other torch with	Allowed if:	Not allowed.

open flame or tools that emit flame or sparks.		
	1. Attended until extinguished.	
	2. Extinguishing materials nearby.	
	3. Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.	
Recreational fires in outdoor commercial fire pit.	Allowed with caution if:	Not allowed.
	1. Attended until extinguished.	
	2. Extinguishing materials nearby.	
	3. Separated from flammables at least 15 feet in all directions.	
	4. Separated from combustibles at least 6 feet in all directions.	
	5. Spark arrester in use.	
	6. Only charcoal or unadulterated wood as fuel (temporary use of commercial fire starter logs allowed).	
	7. Flame height no greater than 2 feet.	
	8. Maximum size of chamber 3 feet wide by 2 feet high.	
	9. Not allowed on town property.	Not allowed.
Outdoor Smoking:		
• On residential property.	Allowed if smoking implements are fully extinguished prior to safe disposal.	Not allowed.
• On town property.	Allowed only in designated smoking areas in accordance with state law on location restrictions and if proper receptacles for disposal of smoking implement, whether extinguished or not, are provided and used.	Not allowed.

•	On commercial restaurant and other property.	Allowed only in designated smoking areas in accordance with state law on location restrictions and if proper receptacles for disposal of smoking implement, whether extinguished or not, are provided and used.	Not allowed.
•	Outdoor disposal of smoking implement or any portion thereof, whether or not extinguished, onto the ground.	Not allowed.	Not allowed.
•	Outdoor flicking of embers from a lit smoking implement onto the ground.	Not allowed.	Not allowed.

(Ord. No. 15-2018, § 1(8.10.020), 9-13-2018; Ord. No. 1-2021, § 1(8.10.020), 1-28-2021; Ord. No. 10-2021, § 1(8.10.020), 10-14-2021)

8.28.030. Implementation of fire restrictions and notice.

- (a) Town stage 1 fire restrictions. Whenever the town Fire Chief imposes and advertises town stage 1 fire regulations, depending on fuel and weather, on all public and private property and on town owned property to include the water system.
- (b) Town stage 2 fire restrictions. Whenever El Paso County, Colorado, imposes and advertises El Paso County stage 2 fire restrictions within the unincorporated areas of El Paso County in accordance with El Paso County Ordinance 15-001, as may be amended, such action shall also mean that town stage 2 fire restrictions shall be automatically imposed within the boundaries of the Town of Palmer Lake on all public and private property and on town property. The town shall post notice of such town stage 2 fire restrictions on the town web site and the electronic town sign within one business day of the date on which the town stage 2 fire restrictions are automatically effective. Upon a cessation of El Paso County stage 2 fire restrictions within the unincorporated areas of El Paso County, such town stage 2 fire restrictions shall also automatically cease to be applicable within the town, without limiting the ability of the town to impose additional or different special town fire restrictions in accordance with subsection (c). Upon a cessation of El Paso County stage 2 fire restrictions, and resulting cessation of town stage 2 fire restrictions, the town shall alter or remove the provided notices, as relevant. The failure of the town to post or remove the notices as set forth in this subsection shall be a defense to a charge of violating this chapter.
- (c) Special town fire restrictions. In addition to the stage 1 fire restrictions and stage 2 fire restrictions as identified in subsections (a) and (b) above, in the event that the fire chief determines that an emergency exists and the fire danger in the town or on town property, to include the water system, is above normal, then the fire chief may declare that a fire danger exists and impose appropriate special town fire restrictions by written declaration. Such special town fire restrictions may be in addition to or in lieu of and may or may not be the same as either the town stage 1 fire restrictions or town stage 2 fire restrictions. Upon issuance of such emergency declaration and imposition of special town fire restrictions, the town shall post notice of such town imposed fire restrictions on the town web site, and the electronic town sign. Special town fire restrictions imposed hereunder shall remain in effect for the entirety of the time that such restrictions are

posted in accordance with this section. Upon a change in or the cessation of special town fire restrictions, the town shall alter or remove the provided notices, as relevant. The failure of the town to post or remove the notices as set forth in this subsection shall be an affirmative defense to a charge of violating this chapter involving a violation of special town fire restrictions.

- (d) Red flag warnings. Whenever a red flag warning is issued which includes the Town of Palmer Lake, such action shall also mean that town stage 2 fire restrictions shall be automatically imposed within the boundaries of the Town of Palmer Lake on all public and private property and on town property.

In addition to the legally required notice as set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, the town may pursue, as a courtesy only, additional notice of the applicable fire restrictions to the public through a general press release to newspapers, radio and television channels operating or distributed within the town. In addition, the town may pursue, as a courtesy only, a posting of notice of town stage 1 fire regulations or any town stage 2 fire restrictions or special town fire restrictions at designated sites.

(Ord. No. 15-2018, § 1(8.10.030), 9-13-2018; Ord. No. 1-2021, § 1(8.10.030), 1-28-2021; Ord. No. 10-2021, § 1(8.10.030), 10-14-2021)

8.28.040. Penalty for violations.

Any person found guilty of violating any provision of this chapter, with each violation constituting a separate and distinct offense, shall be punished as adopted by resolution in the town master fee schedule.

(Ord. No. 15-2018, § 1(8.10.040), 9-13-2018; Ord. No. 1-2021, § 1(8.10.040), 1-28-2021; Ord. No. 10-2021, § 1(8.10.040), 10-14-2021)