United States Department of Agriculture

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June 30, 2005

NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT TECHNICAL NOTE NO. 9

SUBJECT: ECS – AIR QUALITY SMOKE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Purpose: To distribute Environment Technical Note 9.

Effective Date: When received.

Filing Instructions: Maintained on web page.

Attached is Environment Technical Note 9. This will provide a brochure, "Open Burning and Smoke Management: What You Need to Know Before You Burn" and guidance, "New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau Smoke Management Guide" on New Mexico open burning and smoke management requirements. The producer is responsible for fulfilling open burning requirements and/or the smoke management requirements, including registration, notification and tracking. Field offices can assist producers by providing information on where to find the most current requirements.

GEORGE CHAVEZ
State Resource Conservationist

Attachments

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

For More Information Contact:

OPEN BURNING

NM Environment Department
Air Quality Bureau
2044 Galisteo St.
Santa Fe, NM 87505
smoke@nmenv.state.nm.us
Toll free: (800)224-7009
Direct Number: (505)955-8038
Fax: (505)827-1543

SMOKE MANAGEMENT

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Visit us on the web!

www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb

Smoke Management Program & Alternatives to Burning

To meet the requirements of the Smoke Management Regulation, managers must consider actions that can be taken in lieu of burning or to reduce the amount and duration of smoke produced by larger burning projects categorized as SMP II.
These are separated into two categories:

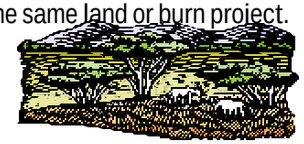
Alternatives to Burning

An alternative to burning is any method of removing or reducing fuels by mechanical, biological, or chemical treatments that replaces the use of fire for at least three years.
Non-burning alternatives should, if they are to be satisfactory treatments, mimic at least some of the effects for which prescribed burning is typically used.

Examples are the plowing and tilling of vegetation left after harvesting in an agricultural field, or application of approved herbicides in conjunction with mechanical removal of vegetation.

Emission Reduction Technique

Emission reduction techniques are any burning techniques that reduce the actual amount of emissions produced from fire. Generally emission reduction techniques are methods that minimize the area burned, reduce fuel loading, reduce the amount of fuel consumed, or otherwise minimize emissions. Emission reduction techniques are used with fire, and are not considered alternatives to fire if used within three years of a prescribed burn on the same land or burn project.



These techniques can include:

- Cutting, gathering and transport of downed and standing materials to another location for processing into reusable products or immediate recycling.
- Composting of vegetation and later reuse to enrich soil.
- Elimination of standing vegetation by livestock grazing or introduction of crops that do not require burning.

WHY A SMOKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?

Air Quality regulations are necessary to preserve the quality of air that all New Mexicans breathe and to protect our scenic views. New Mexico air quality regulations require that all users of prescribed fire, those burning piled material and wildfire managers submit information about their burns and follow the regulations in the Smoke Management Rule.

WHAT DOES THE AIR QUALITY BUREAU DO WITH THE INFORMATION I SUBMIT?

The information supplied by SMP I and SMP II burners is compiled on a daily basis by airshed. This enables the AQB to consider the effects of smoke production and weather conditions on air quality in the airshed. If it appears that air quality would be threatened, SMP II burners may be asked to modify or postpone their burn project. SMP I burners will not be affected.

Open Burning And Smoke Management

What you need to know before you burn

New Mexico Environment Department
Air Quality Bureau

To download and submit SMP I and SMP II forms and instructions, or waivers and instructions, Go to: http://smoke.state.nm.us

Open Burning and Smoke Management

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The Open Burning Regulation apply if you burn no more than 10 acres or 1,000 cubic feet of piled vegetative material in a day. Smoke Management applies if you plan to burn more than 10 acres or 1,000 cubic feet (if piled) in one day. The level of smoke management needed depends on the amount of emissions that will be produced in one day.

OPEN BURNING REGULATION:

Key Requirements:

- No registration is necessary.
- At least 300 ft. from occupied buildings on neighboring property
- 1 hr. after sunrise to 1 hr. before sunset
- Attend at all times
- No trash (tires, etc.)
- Notify fire department
- If more than 1 acre or 100 cu. ft., notify neighbors within ¼ mile
- Material must be as dry as possible

To download a checklist and guide for open burning of vegetative material, go to: www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb

SMOKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM I

⇒ More than Open Burning and less than 1 ton of PM 10 * emissions per day.

Registration, Notification and Tracking Required.

- Fill out the proper forms
- Visual monitoring is required for all burns
- At least 300 ft. from neighboring property
- 1 hour after sunrise to 1 hour before sunset

OR

- Ventilation Index ** must be good or better
- If burning will take place less than 1 mile from a populated area visual monitoring is required
- Notify local fire authority and perform one method of public notification.
- Complete tracking forms within 2 weeks of Burn project completion.

SMP I Applies

if you burn this much per day:

Vegetation Type	
Field Crops	11-64 acres
Shrub Land	11-33 acres
Forest	11-22 acres
Grass	11-99 acres
Piled Material	1001-4999 cubic ft.

SMOKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM II

⇒ Greater than or equal to 1 ton of emissions per day.

Registration, Notification and Tracking Required.

- Fill out the proper forms
- Visual monitoring is required for all burns
- Review smoke management educational material
- Consider Alternatives to burning
- Implement at least one Emission Reduction Technique
- Ventilation Index must be good or better
- If burning will take place within less than 15 miles of a populated area , additional public notification requirement and a waiver are required.

SMP II Applies

if you burn this much or more per day:

Vegetation Type	
Field Crops	65 acres
Shrub Land	34 acres
Forest	23 acres
Grass	100 acres
Piled Material	5000 cubic ft.

WAIVERS

Waivers can be obtained for SMP I and SMP II for time of day, setbacks and ventilation category. SMP II can also obtain a waiver for the use of emission reduction techniques. Waiver requests must be submitted at the time of registration except for ventilation category which can be submitted up to the day before. The burn must not proceed until an approval has been received and can only proceed under permitted conditions.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Documentation must be kept for 1 year
- Only vegetative material may be burned
- Review of the New Mexico Smoke Management Program Guidance Document will count as Smoke Management Education
- Air curtain incinerators are under separate regulations which require permits.
- Compliance with these air quality regulations does not relieve the burner from any local burning ordinances, fire safety restrictions issued by other state or local authorities, or the consequences of an escaped fire.

* PM 10 refers to airborne particles less than 10 thousandths of a millimeter in diameter. These tiny smoke particles can lodge deep in the lungs and cause lung diseases, heart attacks, and cancer.

** VENTILATION INDEX is a measure of how well the smoke will disperse. It is based on weather conditions as determined by the National Weather Service and published in their daily Fire Weather forecasts.