



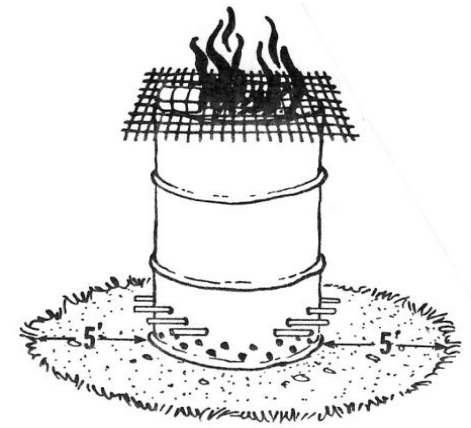
# Michigan's New Household Waste Burning Law

House Bill #4207 which controls what can be burned by Michigan residents was signed into law April 19<sup>th</sup> of 2012. Burn barrels are notorious for emitting hazardous smoke and ash which often contains dioxins, lead, mercury, chromium, arsenic, sulfur, hexachlorobenzene, and particulates. Immediate and long term health effects are directly linked to these substances and include asthma, kidney and liver damage, nervous system, reproductive and developmental disorders. These substances also enter the environment and food chain showing up in your garden vegetables, fish, livestock, and even in the dirt on your children's hands. Additionally, outdoor burning is responsible for starting the majority of Michigan wildfires which number over 8,000 per year.

**Michigan's new law helps to protect the public from these hazards by now prohibiting the burning of plastic, rubber, foam, chemically treated wood, textiles, electronics, chemicals, and hazardous materials; natural materials including untreated paper and cardboard is still permissible.**

Michigan is the only Great Lakes state to still permit household waste burning. The inherent problem lies in that waste stream materials are far more toxic now than in the past. Additionally, burn barrels seldom provide adequate combustion air and ventilation, so materials smolder at low temperatures creating a "toxic soup" that wafts out of the barrel for hours. Please consider composting, recycling or landfilling as an alternative to the health and fire risks associated with outdoor waste burning. If you must burn, use an approved device as described below, and always check the Michigan Burn Permit system to be certain weather conditions are safe for outdoor burning prior to lighting your fire at: [www.michigan.gov/burnpermit](http://www.michigan.gov/burnpermit) or 1-866-922-2876, also visit: [www.firewise.msu.edu](http://www.firewise.msu.edu) and learn more.

- ✓ Cover - Weighted metal mesh with holes no larger than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
- ✓ Combustion and clean burning – Use steel rods or pipes to hold burning material up for clean fast burn.
- ✓ Air supply/draft holes – Locate in the base, holes no larger than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
- ✓ Safety ring – 5ft + circumference of rock, concrete or bare mineral soil around barrel.
- ✓ Be smart – Never leave a fire unattended, you are always responsible for your fire!



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