



FIRE  
SERVICES

## From the DNR: Burn permits suspended across Michigan due to COVID-19

In response to the ["Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order](#) to reduce the effects of the COVID-19 virus, permits for open burning will be suspended across the state. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer issued the order Monday, aimed at further protecting public health and safety.

"We need to make sure our emergency response resources are available where they are needed at this time," said Dan Laux, fire supervisor for the DNR Forest Resources Division. "Less open burning means less potential for escaped fires, and that means staff can deal with other, more critical needs."

Because firefighters often work closely together on scene and when traveling to and from incident locations, the suspension of burn permits also will help protect first responders and fire fighters from infection by the novel coronavirus.

"It's out of an abundance of caution that we want to support the statewide effort to fight COVID-19," Laux said. "Suspending burn permits in much of the state means fewer people will be burning debris – the No. 1 cause of wildfires in Michigan."

State Fire Marshal Kevin Sehlmeyer agreed, adding: "This preventative approach to limiting wildland fires is important so that first responders can continue making medical calls during this health crisis."

Open burning in some parts of the state may still be allowed in areas where the ground is still snow-covered.

Burn permits in the southern Lower Peninsula are issued by local fire departments and governmental offices. In the northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper

Peninsula, permits are issued through the DNR's website [Michigan.gov/BurnPermit](https://Michigan.gov/BurnPermit). Residents are encouraged to frequently check the website to see when restrictions are lifted.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://Michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://CDC.gov/Coronavirus).