



## **Coconino County Wildfire Defense Ordinance (2022-04)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. I live inside the city limits. Does this ordinance apply to me?**

No. This ordinance only applies to the unincorporated areas of Coconino County. It does **NOT** apply inside municipal boundaries, or on federal, state, or tribal lands.

**2. I live outside of a municipal jurisdiction (city/town limits). Does the ordinance apply to my private property?**

Yes. This ordinance applies to private property outside of a residence. It does NOT prevent the use of fire INSIDE a residence (cooking, heating, etc.).

**3. If the County is not under any fire restrictions, then can I have a fire in my yard?**

Yes. Fires are only prohibited during active fire stages. However, we have all seen that fires can engage homes, structures and businesses can be inflamed from nearby fires and we encourage safety measures be employed at all times.

**4. What if I need to build a fire, but the County has active restrictions in place? Can I get permission for the fire?**

Maybe. You can apply for a variance that, if granted, will allow you to use fire under certain conditions.

**5. What is the process for a variance?**

Step 1: Determine if the fire's location will be inside a city/town limits, inside the boundaries of a fire district, or outside of a city/town or fire district. If the location for the fire is inside a city/town, or within the boundaries of a fire district, then you must contact the respective fire department/district that serves the location for a variance.

Step 2: If the location for the fire is both outside of a city/town and a fire district, then you can complete an online variance request at [www.coconino.az.gov/wildfiredefensevariance](http://www.coconino.az.gov/wildfiredefensevariance). If you do not have internet access, then you can call Emergency Management at 928-679-8311 and request a variance form by mail.

Step 3: The Director of Emergency Management will review the details of your application and decide to issue, or deny, the request.

Step 4: A copy of the decision will be emailed to the applicant. If no email is provided, then a copy will be sent via US Post Office.

**6. How long does it take to get a variance?**

Coconino County Emergency Management will process variance requests as quickly as possible. We typically issue a response within two to three business days.

**7. My family would like to hold a cultural ceremony that uses a small fire, but the County is under fire restrictions. Do I need a variance?**

Yes. A variance is required for any activity involving fire if it is currently prohibited under the current fire stage.

**8. The ordinance says I am required to have “adequate fire suppression equipment” at the site. What does that mean?**

The ordinance defines adequate fire suppression equipment as, “*personnel, tools, water, or other equipment suitable for the suppression of fire.*” This will vary based on the site’s location, size, fuel type, intended use, weather conditions, and other factors specific to each request. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Hand tools (shovels, rakes, etc.)
- Water source
- Fire extinguisher
- Personnel
- Tractors, bulldozers, etc.
- Other equipment and supplies

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that adequate fire suppression equipment is present at all times. For assistance, the applicant is encouraged to call the nearest fire department/district with questions (even if they do not reside within that district.)

Other resources may be found at:

- Arizona Fire District Association – [www.azfiredistricts.org](http://www.azfiredistricts.org)
- National Fire Protection Association – [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**9. How will I know if my variance request is approved?**

Coconino County Emergency Management will email a signed response form to the individual requesting a variance. If email is not available, the response will be mailed through the US Post Officer. This form will clearly show “APPROVED” or “DENIED.” If the request is denied, a reason for the denial will be provided.



A copy of the approval form must be available at the variance site during the times of the approved work.