
VILLAGE OF SUGAR GROVE BOARD REPORT

TO: VILLAGE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FROM: PATRICK J. ROLLINS, CHIEF OF POLICE
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION: OPEN BURNING
AGENDA: March 19, 2024
DATE: March 13, 2024

ISSUE

Should the Village Board discuss the Open Burning regulations as a follow up to citizen complaints about health and safety concerns caused by open burning in the community.

DISCUSSION

The Village Board at the August 20, 2019, board meeting approved/amended the open burning ordinance, placing additional conditions and restrictions when open burning is permitted throughout the Village. These additional conditions put in place addressed some of the concerns, but at the same time unknowingly made it burdensome for police and fire officials investigating open burning complaints to make sure all categories are in compliance.

As a reminder at multiple Village Board meetings over the past seven plus years, staff presented some options for the Village Board to consider regarding our Open Burning Ordinance, as several residents have contacted various village departments looking for a remedy. In addition, they have communicated individually with trustees, and some have spoken at past village board meetings on this topic. Residents have raised concerns for their health and safety and the risks associated with permitting open burning of landscape material in the neighborhoods. At times, the smoke and smell drift into adjacent properties and make its way inside the effected homes via air intake systems, open windows, and open doors. Some residents will leave their windows open, go to work or run an errand for the day, and come home to a house that smells and some filled with smoke from someone down the block burning debris. Many upset residents have spoken about spending money to cover the costs for dry cleaning clothes, hiring services to get rid of the smell from their furniture and belongings caused by the leaf burning of their neighbors. In addition, some feel physically trapped in their homes as they have serious health issues and cannot get out of their house to enjoy their own property during the time neighbors burn these types of materials. They have come in front of the village board looking for relief. Some of the homeowners' associations throughout the village do not permit burning of landscape material in their subdivisions as part of their covenants. So only in a few residential areas in the village, the existing ordinance permits residents to dispose of leaves, grass, weeds, and tree limbs, etc. by the burning method.

As a counter point, a number of residents spoke in favor of keeping the Open Burning Ordinance in place as they have numerous trees on their property which would require additional costs associated with disposing of the leaves or bagging them would be labor

intensive if the ordinance was changed. If the village did away with the open burning, some residents spoke at previous board meetings with the desire of the village to come by and pick up the leaves if the residents were allowed to push them into the streets.



Health Concerns still remain prevalent for many citizens with the smoke entering their residence.

The Village's refuse contract permits free pickup of landscaping bags from the residential routes. There is no limit on the number of yard waste bags to be placed out at the curb for weekly collection during April 1 through November 30 of each year. In addition, no stickers are required to be affixed to the bag(s). Residents just need to supply paper lawn style bags or up to a 32-gallon container marked with an "X" or "YW" for pickup.

COST

No cost at this time

RECOMMENDATION – The Village Board by consensus directs staff on the existing ordinance regarding open burning to leave it as is, or have it amended.