



Huntsville Fire Marshal Division

Trench Burning Requirements

(All trench burns **MUST** comply with TCEQ requirements, and a trench burning application must be submitted to the Huntsville Fire Department.)

TCEQ Trench Burn (Air Curtain Incinerator) Fact Sheet

Legal Authorization

A Residential burning permit does NOT allow for a large pile, commercial site, or the use of heavy equipment; all these burns **MUST** follow the trench burning requirements with TCEQ, and submit a trench burn application to the Huntsville Fire Dept. Trench burning in Texas is authorized under the **Permit-by-Rule (PBR)** outlined in **30 TAC § 106.496**. It applies only to **air curtain incinerators (ACIs)** used to burn **trees, clean brush, or wood waste** from land clearing.

Key Requirements

1. Burn Material Restrictions

- Only **wood waste, trees, clean lumber,** and **brush** are allowed.
- No **treated wood, household waste,** or **construction debris**.
- See: [TCEQ PBR Fact Sheet \(GI-619\)](#)

2. Location & Setbacks

- ACI unit must be located:
 - At least **300 feet** from the nearest property line, residence, or public road.
 - Material stockpiles must be **75 feet** from the trench edge.
- Local ordinances may impose stricter limits.
- See: [TCEQ PBR Checklist \(Form 10536\)](#)

3. Trench Construction Specs

- **Trench must be:**
 - ≤ 12 feet wide
 - ≤ 35 feet long
 - ≥ 10 feet deep
 - Constructed with **vertical walls** for proper air curtain operation
- An **air blower/manifold system** is required.
- Reference: [TCEQ PBR Checklist \(Form 10536\)](#)

4. Operating Conditions

- Burn hours: **Begin no earlier than 1 hour after sunrise** and end **no later than 1 hour before sunset**.

- The **blower must remain on** until flames are extinguished and no visible smoke remains.
 - Smoke must **not leave the property** for more than 30 seconds during any 6-minute period. (EPA Method 22)
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5. Ash Disposal

- Ash must be fully extinguished prior to handling.
 - Disposal options:
 - **Bury on site** (must be documented with property deed)
 - **Dispose of at permitted landfill**
 - **Apply for beneficial reuse** (with TCEQ approval)
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6. Recordkeeping Requirements

- Maintain:
 - ACI equipment instructions
 - Logs of trench burn activity, blower use, and ash disposal
 - All records must be available for inspection by TCEQ or fire officials.
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Additional Resources

- [TCEQ Air Curtain Incinerators Home](#)
- [General Operating Permit \(GOP 518\) Info](#)
- [TCEQ Outdoor Burning Handbook \(PDF\)](#)
- [TCEQ Region Office Contacts](#)
- [Huntsville Fire Dept Trench Burn Application](#)