Lakewood Fire District No. 1
733 Cedar Bridge Avenue
Lakewood, NJ 08701

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 25, 2025

Subject: Lag Ba'Omer Safety & Permit Information

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Lag Ba'Omer Safety & Bonfire Permit Information

With Lag Ba'Omer just around the corner, the Lakewood Board of Fire Commissioners in conjunction with Fire Chief Jonathan Yahr, Fire Department Chaplain Rabbi Moshe Rotberg, members of the Lakewood Fire Department and the Office of the Ocean County Fire Marshal offer the following safety tips and Bonfire permit information.

Bonfire Permit: Anyone planning on having a bonfire must obtain a permit from the Ocean County Fire Marshal's Office (OCFM). They can be contacted by calling 732-370-7360. A permit application must be fully filled out and submitted to the Ocean County Fire Marshal's Office along with the Type 1 permit fee of $54, a minimum of ten business days prior to the proposed event. A permit can be obtained online by visiting the Ocean County Fire Marshal's Office website www.oceancountyfiremarshal.com, navigate to the "Important Documents" section, and download and complete the Lag Ba'Omer Permit application. This is the only accepted permit application form for Lag Ba'Omer fires. To download the permit directly, use this link: Download Lag Ba'Omer Permit (PDF). All permit applications must be typed, handwritten applications will not be accepted. To submit and pay by credit card, completed applications should be emailed in PDF format to ocfiremarshal@co.ocean.nj.us. To submit by mail, applications must also be typed and should include a paper check for the $54 permit fee made payable to "OCEAN COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL." These should be mailed to: Ocean County Fire Marshal, P.O. Box 2191, Toms River, NJ 08754-2191.

In addition, permit applications will be available and accepted in person at Lakewood Fire Headquarters, located at 733 Cedar Bridge Avenue, Lakewood from Wednesday, May 7, 2025, through Wednesday, May 14, 2025, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. In-person payment can be by credit card, or paper check, payable to "OCEAN COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL". Handwritten applications and cash will not be accepted. Under no circumstances will any Permits/Applications be accepted after 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday May 14, 2025.

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Please follow all rules and regulations of the OCFM's Office including but not limited to:

- **Provide the most accurate time for the fire to begin as the pre-inspection schedule is set up based on the time on the permit application. All time changes after the applications are submitted must be provided at least 72 hours prior to the bonfire. The ignition time of the bonfire you submit must be adhered to or it may result in the permit not being approved as there are a limited number of Fire Marshals available to inspect and be on-site for each lighting.**
- The permit application must include a responsible party's name, as well as a secondary contact.
- The party responsible must be on location for the lighting of the bonfire; if they are not present, the bonfire will not be allowed to be lit.
- Those planning bonfires that may affect traffic and/or those bonfires requiring police assistance should contact the Lakewood Police Department Traffic & Safety Unit.
- A 15-foot safety area must be set up around the bonfire (depending on the bonfire size). No fires are to be set up with wood chips or mulch as a base.
- Only use clean wood, do not use flammable liquids to start the fire, and have a garden hose with a steady water source at the ready prior to inspection.
- Do not ignite the fire until a Fire Marshal has inspected your site and given approval. Ignition of the bonfire without approval will cause the permit to be revoked and possible penalties to be issued.
- Anyone who does not have an approved Permit will have their fire extinguished and may be subject to penalties.
- The size of the fire shall be no larger than 5'x 5' x 5' and will vary depending on weather conditions which will be strictly adhered to. Stay tuned to your weather stations for up-to-date weather conditions. If asked by a Fire Marshal to reduce the size of the fire, please follow their directions. They may have a reason due to the weather conditions and/or other considerations at the time. Failure to follow the Fire Marshals instructions may cause the permit to be denied or revoked.

The Location: Location needs to be taken into consideration prior to building a fire. A good rule to follow is to keep the fire a minimum of 50 feet from any type of building or vehicle. Avoid building the fire near low-hanging branches, tall grass, brush, or overhead electrical wiring. Basically, stay away from items that can easily catch on fire or cause injury.

The Fire Pit: Building a proper fire pit is one of the best precautions to take. Instead of building the fire on the surface of the ground, if applicable, dig a hole at least 12" to 18" deep. The diameter of the fire pit should be at least two feet wider than the fire will be. Place small rocks or gravel in the bottom of the pit for proper drainage. Make a circle of larger stones around the perimeter of the pit. Don't pile firewood too high. A small amount of wood, combined with kindling materials, will start a good fire. Don't let flames exceed three feet in height or width.

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Bonfire Safety Measures: Have a garden hose in proper working condition, with a steady water source, at the ready. Don't leave flammable materials near the fire pit. Gas, lighter fluid, and alcohol are flammable or combustible items that will feed the fire and shall NOT be used. Do have a shovel nearby. Once the bonfire burns out, use a shovel to turn the materials in the fire pit so blowing embers won't sweep out of the pit and start a rogue fire elsewhere.

Common Sense: A bonfire needs constant attention. Only a responsible adult (18 years of age or older) must tend the fire. Children should never be allowed to play near an open fire. Bring a first aid kit along. If an injury occurs, you'll have supplies available to address any minor injury. In the event of a significant injury contact Hatzolah at (732) 370-3600. Build the fire in a safe location with adult supervision and have emergency materials handy in case of a crisis. Being prepared for the worst while expecting the best is a good motto for bonfire safety. Always follow the direction and supervision of the Fire Marshall.

In Case of Danger: Do not hesitate to call the Fire Department. Follow the instructions of the Fire Marshal.

Stop, Drop and Roll: Review, the principles of "STOP, DROP and ROLL" which are simple: STOP – do not run if your clothes catch on fire. DROP – to the ground and cover your face. ROLL – continue to roll to smother the fire.

"We would like to thank the Lakewood Fire Department and the Ocean County Fire Marshal's Office for working so effectively with Lakewood residents and other agencies on issues of Lag Ba'Omer fire safety," says Lakewood Township Committeeman and Emergency Services Liaison Meir Lichtenstein. "These joint efforts and public cooperation help ensure that all ceremonies proceed safely, smoothly and enjoyably."

The Lakewood Fire Department wishes the community a Happy and Safe Lag Ba'Omer!

Links:

Ocean County Fire Marshalls Office Website: www.oceancountyfiremarshal.com

Lag Ba'Omer Bonfire Permit: https://www.co.ocean.nj.us//WebContentFiles//4c8fd8c5-055e-4c91-94c1-8ebfa98d6e93.pdf

Lakewood Fire Department Website: www.lakewoodfd.org

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