



# PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SAN DIEGO MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING BEACH FIRES

Park and Recreation Board

September 15, 2022

# OBJECTIVES

- Improve public safety
  - Eliminate burn risk from buried hot coals
  - Reduce smoke impacts from portable wood burning devices
- Provide enforcement clarity
  - Create clear regulations for beachgoers
  - Ensure public safety officials can distinguish legal vs. illegal beach fires

# HOT COAL BURN RISKS

- Hot coals and chipped, charred wood poses risk to unsuspecting beachgoers.
- Smoke from numerous beach fires using wood fueled devices or built in the sand can blanket adjacent areas.

August 2018



NEWS

## Toddler burned by hot coals at Mission Bay

A toddler was burned by hot coals buried in the sand at Mission Bay, and now his mother is sharing a warning to other parents.

<https://www.cbs8.com/article/news/toddler-burned-by-hot-coals-at-mission-bay/509-2fb27b68-1026-47d2-9702-eb48387b5d62>



<https://thecoastnews.com/no-wood-fires-allowed-at-local-state-beaches/>

July 2021



Photo credits to Joe Gatto, La Jolla Resident

# CITY-PROVIDED FIRE RINGS

There are no proposed changes to the use of City-Provided Fire Rings.



<https://lajolla.com/article/la-jolla-beach-bonfire/>

# PROPOSED PERMISSIBLE FIRE DEVICES

City-Provided Fire Rings



<https://lajolla.com/article/la-jolla-beach-bonfire/>



Portable Propane-Fueled Devices



<https://coolofthewild.com/best-camping-stoves/>



<https://www.wayfair.com/outdoor/pdp/arlington-co-renteria-cast-iron-propane-fire-pit-wo02672715.html>

# CA BEACH FIRE REGULATIONS

Numerous municipalities across the state currently restrict beach fires to City or State-provided Fire Rings (column 2), limit to Propane Only (column 1) or prohibit all beach fires (column 3.)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA BEACH FIRE REGULATIONS*		
<i>Propane Only</i>	<i>Provided Fire Rings/BBQs Only</i>	<i>No Fires or BBQs</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiff State Beach (SB)</li> <li>• Carlsbad SB</li> <li>• San Elijo SB</li> <li>• South Carlsbad SB</li> <li>• <b>Huntington SB</b></li> <li>• <b>Huntington City Beach</b></li> <li>• <b>Bolsa Chica State Beach</b></li> <li>• <b>Seabright State Beach</b></li> </ul> <p>CHARCOAL AND PROPANE ALLOWED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torrey Pines SB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SAN DIEGO COUNTY BEACHES</b></li> <li>• Moonlight</li> <li>• Oceanside Harbor</li> <li>• Silver Strand SB</li> <li>• Dockweiler SB (grills allowed w/in designated fire pit)</li> <li>• <b>Huntington SB</b></li> <li>• <b>Huntington City Beach</b></li> <li>• <b>Bolsa Chica SB</b></li> <li>• Leo Carrillo State Park</li> <li>• Point Mugu State Park</li> <li>• Ocean Beach</li> <li>• Laguna Beach</li> <li>• <b>Seabright State Beach</b></li> <li>• City of Monterey</li> <li>• Cabrillo Beach</li> <li>• Muir Beach</li> <li>• San Clemente</li> </ul> <p>CHARCOAL ONLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newport Beach</li> </ul> <p>WOOD ONLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capistrano Beach</li> <li>• Aliso Beach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leucadia SB</li> <li>• Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve</li> <li>• Santa Monica Beach</li> <li>• Salt Creek Beach</li> <li>• Moonstone Beach</li> <li>• Sonoma County</li> <li>• Malibu Surfrider</li> <li>• Manhattan Beach</li> <li>• Marina 'Mother's' Beach</li> <li>• Nicholas Canyon</li> <li>• Point Dune</li> <li>• Redondo Beach</li> <li>• Royal Palms</li> <li>• Topanga</li> <li>• Torrance</li> <li>• Venice</li> <li>• White Point</li> <li>• Will Rogers</li> <li>• Zuma</li> </ul>

Bold text indicates both propane and provided fire rings are allowed

# SUMMARY OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- Clarify permissible fire devices: “City-provided fire rings” and “portable propane-fueled devices”
- Remove specification that beach fires are only allowed where a “City-provided fire ring” exists
- Replace “City-provided fire container(s)” with “City-provided fire ring(s)”
- Replace “Public Beach” with “Beach Area”
- Define propane-fueled device

# EXAMPLES OF PROPOSED CHANGES

## §63.0102 USE OF PUBLIC PARKS AND BEACHES REGULATED

### §63.0102 Use of Public Parks and Beaches Regulated

(b) It is unlawful for any person within any public park or plaza or public beach or beach areas within the City of San Diego to do any of the acts enumerated in Section 63.0102(b).

(Sections 1-10, no change.)

(11) Fires. It is unlawful to kindle or allow to be kindled any fire or bonfire, or throw upon the ground a lighted match, lighted cigar or cigarette, or anything that would be liable to set fire to any grass, tree, shrub, building, or other property; provided, however, that nothing in section 63.0102(b)(11) prohibits persons from kindling fires in City-provided fire rings or portable propane-fueled devices as permitted in §63.20.5(c). ~~stoves, ovens, or similar facilities provided by the Park and Recreation Department.~~

§63.0102 (b) (11) Define allowable fire devices on beach areas: City-provided fire rings and portable propane-fueled devices.



# EXAMPLES OF PROPOSED CHANGES

## §63.20.5 WASTE, REFUSE, FIRES

- (c) It is unlawful for any person to build, maintain, use, or be within ten (10) feet of a fire on any ~~public beach area~~ that is not in a *City-provided fire ~~container~~ring or contained within a portable propane-fueled device [see §63.20.5 (e)]. Throughout this Division the term “City-provided fire ~~containers~~ring” means a container made of ~~are~~ concrete and pre-installed at certain beach locations where fires are allowed. ~~Fires are prohibited on beaches where there is no City-provided fire container(s).~~*
- (d) Fires may be built in *City-provided fire ~~containers~~ rings* only using fire materials limited to charcoal, clean wood, or paper products, none of which contains landscape debris, paint, stain, sealer, wood preservative, cloth, rubber, metal (including nails and other hardware), asphalt, foam rubber, plastic, or any similar matter or material producing noxious fumes, odors, smoke, or leaving any type of solid residue other than ash. Fire materials shall not exceed a height of more than twelve (12) inches above the upper edge of the fire container and must be wholly contained within the inside edge of the fire container.

- Change public beach to 'beach area' as defined by §63.20
- Define permissible fire devices: City-provided fire rings or portable propane-fueled device
- Define City-provided fire ring
- Remove "Fires are prohibited on beaches where there is no City-provided fire container(s)"
- Replace container with 'ring'

# EXAMPLES OF PROPOSED CHANGES

## §63.20.5 WASTE, REFUSE, FIRES

(h) It is unlawful for any person who has built, maintained, used, or been within ten (10) feet of a fire ~~on the~~in a beach area to abandon the fire until all ignited fire fuel material has been exhausted or extinguished. Sand, dirt, or similar material shall not be employed as an extinguishing material. Extinguished ashes shall not be covered but may be left in *City-provided fire ~~containers~~rings*. All unused fire material must be removed from the beach and the adjacent public areas of the beach or park. All refuse or rubbish adjacent to the ~~fire~~City-provided fire ~~container~~ring must be removed from the beach or placed in trash receptacles provided for such purpose, so that the beach is left in a clean, sanitary, and presentable condition.

(i) It is unlawful for any person to use a *City-provided fire ~~container~~ring* or a portable propane-fueled barbecue-device on any ~~public~~beach area between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. The City Manager may issue a permit to allow a fire in a *City-provided fire ~~container~~ring* between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.

- Change to “beach area”
- Replace “container(s)” with “ring(s)”
- Specify City-provided fire ring over fire container
- Remove “barbecue device”

# PROPOSAL STATUS

- Draft language passed unanimously at Environment Committee on May 26, 2022
- Undergoing staff review and seeking stakeholder input
- Targeting October City Council hearing

# COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

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