



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF

4410 Cathedral Oaks Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93110

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- Proper Disposal of Fireplace Ashes -

SANTA BARBARA, Ca. January 31, 2012 – With the use of fireplaces and alternative heating methods (pellet stoves, wood burning stoves, etc.), the Santa Barbara County Fire Department reminds people that fires can start due to careless or improper disposal of the leftover ashes. Even after several days, piles of ashes can hold enough heat to reignite and start a fire. Therefore, extra care should be used in the storage and final disposal of ashes.

When you clean your fireplace, there are a few things to keep in mind.

1. You should always place discarded fireplace ashes in a heavy metal container, moisten the ashes and cover the container with a metal lid. Never use a paper bag, a cardboard box or a plastic trash bag in the cleaning process. Never use a vacuum cleaner to pick up ashes.
2. Ashes should be kept in a metal container outside, away from the house to cool. Your garage, house, or deck are dangerous locations for ashes to cool. After ashes have cooled in a metal container, it is necessary to find a suitable disposal site. Never dump fireplace ashes until they have had at least four days to cool. Even after four days, great care should be given in selecting a dump site. Wooded areas should always be avoided.

Proper Disposal of Fireplace Ashes

Garden areas or flower beds are ideal locations to dump cooled fireplace ashes, allowing many nutrients to return to the soil. Please survey the area and evaluate any additional hazards before disposing of your cooled ashes. Make sure all dry leaves have been removed from the area before dumping your ashes in either a garden or flower bed that is away from the house and remember to moisten the area.

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