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Wood burn OK with 2 permits

By KIM SCHMIDT , Hub Staff Writer

KEARNEY — Before they strike a match, people wanting to burn wood pallets and treated wood must obtain two burning permits.

The first burning permit must be issued through the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, while a second permit must be obtained from an area fire department. Recently, a Kearney-area business was notified it couldn't burn pallets without a DEQ permit.

Kevin Stoner, a compliance supervisor for DEQ, said the policy has been in effect since the 1980s, but was revised last year. However, Kearney Volunteer Fire Department Chief Jerry Thompson said up until a few weeks ago the department solely issued permits to burn the wood.

Thompson also was unaware of the policy.

Stoner said burning wood pallets or waste generated from construction projects or demolition of buildings without an approved burn permit from DEQ is a violation and could be punishable by a fine. Treated wood has been painted, glued, stained or covered with a pesticide.

It takes a few weeks to obtain the permit from DEQ, but it is free and good for up to six months. Permits from KVFD can be obtained the day people want to burn and are good for that day.

A burn permit application can be downloaded from DEQ's Web site at www.deq.state.ne.us or obtained by contacting the Air Quality Division at 402-471-2189 or 877-253-2603.

e-mail to:
kim.schmidt@kearneyhub.com

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