

HOME

The dos and don'ts of backyard fire pits



Once a rarity, fire pits have grown increasingly popular in recent years, as more and more homeowners turn their homes into private oases. Fire pits run the gamut from the very simple to the more elaborate, and the fire pits homeowners choose often depend on the space they have available as well as their budgets.

But even homeowners without any space or budget constraints should give careful consideration to which fire pit they ultimately install, especially if they plan to

make that installation themselves. The following are some dos and don'ts of fire pits for those homeowners about to add this relaxing and popular accessory to their backyards.

DO confirm you can legally build a fire pit in your yard. Fire pits have become so commonplace that homeowners may think there are no regulations governing their construction. However, it's still best to confirm with your local government planning or zoning offices if you can build a fire pit and if any restrictions apply.

DON'T proceed with the project until you have been granted official approval. Assuming you have the go-ahead to build a fire pit is not the same thing as knowing you have been approved. Starting early could result in fines if it turns out you aren't allowed to have a fire pit. But you may also begin building a bigger fire pit than the local government allows, and that could be money down the drain later. Wait until you get official word before you proceed with the project.

DO build on flat ground. The fire pit should be built on flat ground to reduce risk of accident and/or injury. A fire pit built on flat ground also means everyone can enjoy it comfortably and equally once the project is finished. If the ground around the pit is not flat, some people may be forced to sit crooked or lean forward just to enjoy the pit.

DON'T build near flammable structures. Build the fire pit far enough away from existing structures, such as your home, garage or shed, so flickering flames do not catch some wind and lead to disaster. Before building in a given spot, monitor the wind patterns for a few days by sitting in a lawn chair at the spot you ultimately want the fire pit to be. If you notice the wind is blowing toward your house, you will want to choose another area for the pit so smoke from the fire will not be blowing into your home every night.

DO choose the right size. The size of your fire pit will depend on the space you have available, but even if you have a vast swath of space, keep in mind that

professional contractors typically recommend building a fire pit no bigger than 44 inches wide. Anything larger can be unsightly and may not appeal to prospective buyers down the road. In addition, an especially large fire pit may result in potentially unruly flames that can present a fire hazard.

DON'T go it alone if your DIY skills are suspect. Installing a fire pit is a relatively inexpensive DIY job, but that does not mean anyone can do it. Ground needs to be excavated and the slope of the yard must be measured so the fire pit is safe and functional for years to come. If your DIY skills are not up to snuff, hire a professional contractor so your backyard oasis does not become a costly headache.

A fire pit can turn a boring backyard into a relaxing retreat. But homeowners must adhere to the dos and don'ts of fire pits to ensure their retreat is something they can enjoy for years to come.

GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY!

OSO KLEEN
CLEANING & RESTORATION
541-567-3781 • 1-800-238-1223
905 Diagonal • Hermiston
www.osokleen.com

IRRIGATION SPECIALISTS

81156 N. Hwy. 395
Hermiston, OR

567-6370

HENDON CONSTRUCTION CO., INC.

Industrial - Commercial
Agricultural

(541) 922-3844

82075 Hwy 395 N.
HERMISTON

www.swaggartbrothers.com

SWAGGART Brothers
CALL TODAY! (541) 564-9000

Contact Jodi Snook

at

541-278-2670

or

jsnook@eastoregonian.com

Mc LAUGHLIN LANDSCAPING

Quality & Service from the ground up!

1160 Tutuilla Rd., Pendleton, OR 97801
(541) 276-5945 • (541) 567-3660
McLaughlinLandscaping.com

Our Office Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

WHEATLAND INSURANCE CENTER, INC.
Serving Eastern Oregon Since 1988
Commercial • Farms & Crops • Agriculture • Ranch • Personal • Industrial
Workers' Compensation • Service Organizations • Health, Life & Financial Services
Our experienced agents can analyze your insurance needs and select the company or companies best suited to your individual situation.
At Wheatland Insurance Center, you get hometown service from your neighbors and friends. Stop in and say Hello! We're open from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, or by appointment. www.wheatlandins.com
Pendleton: 245 1st St., Suite 100 • PO Box 26 Phone 541-432-7410 Fax 541-278-1588
Hermiston: 24th St., PO Box 705 Phone 541-574-9113 Fax 541-278-1588
Hermiston: 425 E. Main St., PO Box 1240 Phone 541-567-8834 Fax 541-278-1588
Offices also located in: PENDLETON • CONDON • BURN • LA GRANDE • ENTERPRISE • ATHENA • WALLACIA • BAKER CITY

UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

*Scholarship Application Information
Available at umatillaelectric.com*

203 NE Boardman Ave. 750 W. Elm St.
Boardman, Ore 97818 Hermiston, OR 97838
541-481-2220 800-452-2273 541-567-6414
www.umatillaelectric.com

ELMER'S IRRIGATION, INC.

"The best little irrigation company in the Northwest"

Hwy 395 • Hermiston
541-567-5572