



## VERONA FIRE DEPARTMENT

101 Lincoln Street  
Verona, WI 53593-1520  
Phone: 608-845-9401  
Fax: 608-845-9455  
Website: [www.veronafire.com](http://www.veronafire.com)



### Proper Fireplace Ash Disposal

The Verona Fire Department would like to remind residents of the importance of proper disposal of ashes.

Each year, Fire Departments respond to fires caused by improper disposal of hot coals or ashes from fireplaces, wood stoves, pellet stoves, and grills or mobile fireplaces designed for use on decks or patios.

The fact is that coals and ashes from fires can remain hot enough to start a fire for many days after you think the fire is out. The exact amount of time for complete extinguishment and cooling depends on many factors such as how hot the fire was, what was burning, how much unburned fuel remains, etc.

To view a YouTube video that Portland Fire & Rescue in Oregon developed to show how dangerous improper handling of ashes can be go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MciWOT2Pu\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MciWOT2Pu_Y)

**To be safe always, simply treat all ashes and coals as hot, even when you think they had time enough to cool.**

**To properly dispose of ashes or coals we recommend the following:**

- If possible, allow ashes and coals to cool for up to a week before removing them. Fireplaces and wood or pellet stoves are designed to contain their heat safely.
- When it is time to dispose of the ashes, transfer them to a non-combustible, **metal container with a tight fitting metal lid** and wet them down. Buckets made especially for storage of ashes are available at many area retailers.
- **NEVER** use a vacuum cleaner to pick up ashes.
- They should **NEVER** be disposed of in a plastic garbage bag or can, a cardboard box, or paper grocery bag. While this sounds obvious, it happens way too often.
- The metal container should then be placed outside the home, away from anything that can burn. It should **NOT** be placed next to the firewood pile, up against the garage, on or under a wooden deck, or under a porch. Keep at a minimum of 10 feet from your home.
- **DO NOT** place any other combustibles in the metal container.

## **More Fireplace Safety Tips**

- Have your chimney inspected annually, and cleaned as necessary, by a professional chimney sweep to ensure it is clear of obstructions, creosote, or any cracks that could allow fire to spread to your home.
- Repair any cracks in your chimney and fireplace.
- Use fireplace screens to keep sparks and fire debris inside the fireplace.
- Do not use an accelerant to start a fire.
- Ensure the fire is completely out before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Make sure the area around the fireplace or wood stove is clear of all combustibles (Three feet away is a good rule).
- Keep all children and pets a safe distance from fireplaces.
- Ensure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in every sleeping area, on every floor. Test them regularly and replace every 10 years.
- Keep a fire extinguisher on hand.
- Observe all safety precautions when using outdoor fireplaces they can be just as dangerous as indoor units.