

Fire Pits

There is no doubt in my mind that being able to relax around a fire is one of the best things about life in Bergen Springs. It is therapeutic in relieving the stress from a long weeks work and it is (usually) an open invitation to all to drop in for a little libation and some friendly conversation.

Everyone enjoys a good fire but not everyone is properly set up to safely enjoy their fire pit. When setting up a pit area you need to take a few things into account and like the saying goes it is location, location, location. You want to be out of the wind if possible and you need to be VERY careful about overhanging tree limbs. You need to decide if you want privacy or if you like to wave to everyone that goes by. Do you want to be sheltered or do you want to take advantage of the sunshine (when it is out). Do you want to build a gazebo now that it has been approved by the County and if not then are there trees near by to support a tarp system to keep you dry during the odd wet weekend.

If you do use the tarp system you should (in my opinion) design it so that you can easily take it down when not in use. If you can easily take it down then you can make use of the sun when it is out and you also keep the area looking nicer for yourself and for your neighbours (bright coloured tarps really stand out).

After you make all these decisions then you need to decide what type of pit you want to put in and everyone has their own opinion as to what the best type is. Some like to bury them in the ground, some like to hang it in the air (on stands) like some of the metal fire places you can buy. Some like the brick style and some even use old washtubs.

If you do bury it in the ground please be aware of the risk of starting and under ground fire in a trees root system. The best way would be to dig it out and lay a good gravel base down so that the fire is not actually on the bare ground.

What I have done is poured a cement base then put a row of bricks and then I put an old truck tire wheel well on this. The heavy wheel well really helps to radiate the heat. You want to remember to use something that has air holes in the bottom, without air your fire may have more smoke than flame.

Any way you decide to do this please keep **safety** in mind. A fire in our park would wipe out everything we have worked so hard to achieve here and it really means just using common sense. If you want a little help in setting up a pit there are lots of old hands in the park that would be willing to give their opinion (some even if you don't want it).

Have a great summer.

Roland