

Bonfires on Dewey Beach – Overview

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Current Pricing

Non-Property Owners: \$50 + a refundable deposit of \$100.

Property Owners: \$30 + a refundable deposit of \$100.

Current Booking Process

All bonfires must be booked in person at Town Hall using cash or credit card. Customer completes a permit application that lists rules and regulations, permit is signed by both customer and town staff member. Credit card numbers and customer information are added and stored on a secure third-party server. Booking is recorded on both a payment log and grid in Excel to ensure only one booking per street. Permit is scanned and saved, original is given to customer to serve as their permit for the fire.

Current Refund Process

DBP or beach concessions provider will notify Town staff the following morning if a bonfire was not properly cleaned up, and this reservation will be “flagged” on the payment log as a no refund. All other bonfires handled correctly are refunded the day after the fire by a staff member.

Concerns

The amount of bonfires grows each year, and the processes to both book and refund are time-consuming for staff and customer. Many customers express the desire to book online rather than having to come into Town Hall. Unfortunately, finding an online booking software that can do everything – including refunds – is difficult and costly. We would also face the problem of having to discern who is a property owner and who is not through the online booking process, which is not feasible.

Ideas for Consideration

- Institute a flat fee for bonfires for all customers, remove the refundable deposit entirely.
- Issue a civil violation/fine of \$100 for those who do not clean up their fire. This is already provided in code under section 80-8 referencing littering.
- Without having to do routine refunds, or discern property owners from non-property owners, we can explore utilizing our existing website “facility booking platform” that could be used for bonfire reservations. Customers will be able to book online with this platform. This would also greatly streamline the process for Town staff.