

IMAGINE GREATER WITH WICHMAN



www.wichmanlandscapes.com



Fire Pit

This simple guide is provided to help the homeowner learn and understand the basics of hardscape fire pit construction details.

The decision to install a fire pit can be a statement in evening entertaining. The idea of sitting around an open fire, either enjoying the warm glow of the flames or cooking S'mores, invokes enjoyable times. To have the additional accessibility of food and drink at one's disposal will insure the entertaining is "Over the Top"!

Fire pit construction is a simple project and in most cases is installed when the patio is put in place. The reason is because of utilities. A drain line has to be put in place to allow for rain water and melted snow some place to run off to, instead of being allowed to build up in the pit; and if the fuel is gas other than wood, then the gas lines need to be put into place. Circumference size of the pit can vary and normally cast iron inserts are placed inside the pit to hold the fire wood. Other fill options are ceramic logs or briquettes. Seating walls are option and consequently, fire pits are normally installed when the patio is constructed.

Therefore, our advice is --- **"learn about the type of fire pit layout you need and want and take your time to make a decision"**. --- We encourage the homeowner to examine as many different layouts and choices as possible. Look through the Wichman social media sites noted on the last page as well as examine "Pins" on Pinterest and "Ideabooks or Projects" on Houzz. Pick up and examine as many of the various landscaping design booklets or browse through the various product design brochures offered by the paver manufacturers as well as offerings made by the landscape supply houses, to get a sense of what is available in the way of product choices. For your convenience, we have listed embedded sites to view at the end of the bulletin.

This technical bulletin addresses the basics of fire pit construction design features and will help the homeowner to plan the best layout that meets their needs and budget.

Wichman Landscape Construction, LLC | 107 Buehner Drive, Pittsburgh, PA. 15237

Phone: 412-760-8524 | www.wichmanlandscapes.com

Registered Home Improvement Contractor – PA 041225

A full-service landscaping company serving the greater Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area

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The first consideration is the placement of the fire pit and the proximity to the house. The fire pit should be located far enough away such that smoke and heat from the fire will not make the evening uncomfortable. Next, look at the diameter it will encompass and determine the proper placement. When considering a fire pit, paver blocks and stone products are best suited for the construction. Many fire pits are sold as kits and include caps and metal inserts. Others can be constructed from wall block and paving block products. Wichman Landscape Construction can advise best on the product choice for the fire pit that will meet your budget.

Furthermore, we will work along with other contractors to install features such as gas, if that is the choice for fuel.

When first starting to scope out the project, consider these issues:

- **Neighbors.** Depending on the project scope and the proximity to neighboring properties, let your neighbors know about your project before you begin.
- **Winterization.** Always a consideration is rain, snow and the harsh elements of the winter season. The fire pit should be covered in the winter time to prevent fouling of the burner system from snow and ice buildup. As part of the original installation, Wichman Landscape Construction will provide a pressure treated plywood cover, cut to fit the opening with a decorative spark screen..
- **Site Access.** Depending on the work to done, ease of access and the ability to move equipment and material into and out of the work site needs to be considered and factored into the project.
- **Utilities.** Gas (LPG or NG) will need to be made available.

Planning Your Fire Pit:

Use the embedded Wichman worksheet [Grid technical sheet.pdf](#) to layout both a plot as well as elevation plan to develop the design.

Please fill in the blanks to develop the fire pit:

Diameter _____

Gas or wood burning _____

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Please consider the following:

A. Compliance of site to latest site plan

- Does the site plan and layout coincide with current site conditions?
- Do the section drawings match the topography of the job-site?
- Have site utilities been accounted for?
- Are there any recommendations for changes to the site plans to accommodate the added features such as a retaining wall?

B. Review of reported soil conditions with Wichman Landscape Construction and if necessary a soils engineer

- Are on site soils consistent with soil parameters used in the design?
- Does the site show indications of multiple types of soils and has this been accounted for?
- Is there evidence of landfill areas on site?

C. Review of above-grade water management

- Has surface runoff been accounted for in the site design?
- Will this site be irrigated?
- If storm drains become inoperable where will the water migrate to?
- During renovation of land will temporary drainage be an issue?

D. Review of below grade water management

- How and where will drain piping be installed?
- Is it possible to vent drain pipe to daylight?
- Is venting to a storm drainage system an option?
- Will outlets be located and protected from blockage or damage?

E. Site Access

- Does the site have easy access to earth moving equipment?
- Is there a plan to remediate the property to its former condition if the equipment used to construct the patio damages the surrounding property?
- Does the site allow for the transportation of soil either taken from or brought to the site as fill?

F. Recommended material manufacturers that supply fire pit product into the Pittsburgh region:

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- <http://www.techo-bloc.com/>
- <http://www.lampus.com/>
- <http://www.unilock.com/>
- <http://www.belgard.com/>

G. Recommended Wichman & social media sites to view for further information and ideas

- <https://www.facebook.com/wichmanlandscape>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/jeffwichman/>
- http://www.houzz.com/pro/jeffwichman/_public/wichman-landscape-and-construction
- <https://www.pinterest.com/designfireplace/outdoor-fireplace-designs/>
- <http://www.houzz.com/backyard-fire-pit>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/chadking/fire-pits/>

**When in doubt or you if have any questions, please consult
with Wichman Landscape Construction.**

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