

# NORWICH RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Jill Kearney Niles - Director

## Welcome to the Historic Barrett Meadow Bread Oven

Please call the Recreation Department at 802-649-1419 x. 5 to reserve the area or use the oven.

The oven, as part of the Barrett Meadow area is **for Norwich residents and their guests**. The area is offered for use free of charge for Norwich residents, but we ask that our Guidelines be followed carefully. For any outside group, there is a \*\$50 charge to book and use it for a meal and our Guidelines must be followed carefully.

\*Payment must be received prior to use. Check Payable to/sent to:

Town of Norwich - Recreation P.O. Box 1137, Norwich, VT 05055

### GUIDELINES for use of the BARRETT MEADOW HISTORIC OVEN:

**Please do not attempt to use the oven without prior instruction from an individual experienced with its use.**

Please call Rob Gurwitt (802-649-2766) or Dan Haedrich (802-649-1137) for specific instructions regarding using this oven. It is a prerequisite for using this oven to first work with another experienced outdoor baker to train to use it correctly. Approved folks are: Dan & Rob listed above and Todd Mackenzie, Alex Fuld, Jamie Hess, Lars Blackmore, & Nan Schwartzman

Users need to provide & bring their own water for clean-up.

A certificate of insurance must be supplied to the Norwich Finance Office in Tracy Hall if oven is used on a regular basis and donations/monies are accepted for goods produced.

**NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are allowed on site. It is Town property.

**Please help us keep our facility clean. Leave no trace. Please alert all attending any event here that there is no restroom/port-o-potty. No parking that restricts any traffic is allowed on Bragg Hill Road or Beaver Meadow Road**  
**Carry out all trash & recyclables.**

## NORWICH OVEN USERS

Welcome to the Barrett Meadow oven. This is one of Norwich's finer jewels, and though it's solid and hardy, it needs careful tending. It gets a lot of use, so here are a few tips and cautions – by observing them, you'll help the oven last and make everyone else's experience better.

- Please keep the area around the oven neat. If you leave wood behind, stack it neatly and expect that others will likely use it. This is shared space.
- Please clean up the work table when you're finished so it is clean enough for food to be placed on it for the next person using it.
- Please treat the tools you find respectfully and put them back when you're done. Many depend on them.
- DO NOT BURN SECOND-HAND WOOD WITH NAILS OR SCREWS IN IT. This should be self-evident, but just to state the obvious: nails don't burn, but they do remain on the floor of the oven and could wind up in someone's dinner or loaf of bread.
- When you're done baking, please make sure all coals are pushed to the far back of the oven and the oven floor is left as clean as possible.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Newspaper, Kindling and Firewood, Long Lighter or Matches, a Large Bucket of Water, rugged oven mitts, Half cup of Flour to test heat (or a rugged thermometer). Also trash bag(s) and recycling container or bag - both to carry out as you leave, your ingredients/food, materials for cleaning up.

### **TIPS ON FIRING THE OVEN**

This is a Quebecois-style oven, of a design that's served farmers and their families well for at least three centuries. It has no flue - air comes in and smoke leaves by the door, which makes it especially efficient. Lighting it right, and not overdoing the fire, will help the oven last. One thing you should know right off: It takes at least two hours to get the oven up to proper heat.

Before you begin, make sure you've got a bucket of water available. You'll need it later to clean the floor of the oven, and you'll want it on hand in case something outside the oven catches fire.

- 1) Light a SMALL fire just inside the entrance. The shock of sudden high heat in a cold oven will ruin the bond between the metal doorframe and the clay/cement behind it, and ultimately will create holes. Start slow.
- 2) Once the fire has started to burn down, add some more wood and push it back a little bit.
- 3) Let it burn there for a while, before adding more wood, and pushing back some more. Repeat this process over the next few hours—the idea is that you're *gradually* heating the floor, air and roof of the oven. A moderate fire will do it – as you push it back, it will spread and grow.
- 4) Once the fire is all the way back, clean the floor using the swabbing pole that sits above it. To test for heat, toss in some flour – if it turns golden in a couple of seconds, it's good for pizza; five or six seconds, it's good for bread.