
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
July 21, 2020

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations
and Rural Development
BC Wildfire Service

Open fire prohibition scheduled for Coastal Fire Centre

PARKSVILLE – Effective at noon Pacific time on Friday, July 24, 2020, most open burning activities will be prohibited throughout the Coastal Fire Centre’s jurisdiction, although campfires will still be allowed. This prohibition is being enacted to help reduce wildfire risk and protect public safety.

Category 2 and Category 3 open fire will be prohibited throughout the Coastal Fire Centre's jurisdiction with the exception being Category 3 open fire will not be prohibited in Haida Gwaii.

This prohibition applies to all public and private land, unless specified otherwise (e.g., in a local government bylaw). People are asked to check with local government authorities for any other restrictions before lighting any fire.

A map of the affected areas is available online [here](#).

Specifically, this prohibition applies to:

- Category 2 open fire
 - the open burning of any material (piled or unpiled) smaller than two metres high and three metres wide;
 - the open burning of material concurrently in 2 piles each not exceeding 2 m in height and 3 m in width; or
 - burning of stubble or grass fires over an area smaller than 0.2 hectares.
- Category 3 open fire
 - any fire larger than 2 metres high by 3 metres wide;
 - the burning of 3 or more concurrently burning piles no larger than 2 metres high by 3 metres wide;
 - the burning of 1 or more windrows; and
 - burning stubble or grass over an area greater than 0.2 hectares.

Also prohibited are the activities listed below (*Wildfire Act, Section 12*):

- Fireworks;
- Sky Lanterns;
- Binary Exploding Targets;
- Burn Barrels or Burn Cages of any size or description; and,
- Air Curtain Burners

The prohibition does not apply to campfires that are a half-metre high by a half-metre wide or smaller, or to cooking stoves that use gas, propane or briquettes. A poster explaining the different categories of open burning is available online at: www.gov.bc.ca/openfireregs

Anyone lighting a campfire must maintain a fireguard by removing flammable debris from around the campfire area and have a hand tool or at least eight litres of water available nearby to properly extinguish the fire.

The Coastal Fire Centre covers all of the area west of the height of land on the Coast Mountain Range from the U.S.-Canada border at Manning Park, including Tweedsmuir South Provincial Park in the north, the Sunshine Coast, the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and Haida Gwaii.

Anyone found in contravention of an open fire prohibition may be issued a violation ticket for \$1,150, required to pay an administrative penalty of up to \$10,000 or, if convicted in court, fined up to \$100,000 and/or sentenced to one year in jail. If the contravention causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

To report a wildfire, unattended campfire or open fire violation, call 1 800 663-5555 toll-free or *5555 on a cellphone. For the latest information on current wildfire activity, burning restrictions, road closures and air quality advisories, go to: <http://www.bcwildfire.ca>

Follow the latest wildfire news:

- on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BCGovFireInfo>
- on Facebook: <http://facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo>

Quick Fact:

- When implementing open fire prohibitions in the past, the Coastal Fire Centre sometimes excluded a two-kilometre strip of land along the outer coast of Vancouver Island (commonly known as the fog zone) due in part to a lack of fire-related community bylaws in the area at the time. It has been determined that it is no longer necessary to exclude this two-kilometre strip of land from open fire prohibitions enacted within the BC Wildfire Service's jurisdiction.

Contact:

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