
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

Open burn prohibition scheduled for Coastal Fire Centre

PARKSVILLE – Effective at noon Pacific time on Thursday, May 30, 2019, Category 2 open burns will be prohibited throughout the Coastal Fire Centre's jurisdiction to reduce wildfire risks and protect public safety.

This prohibition will remain in effect until the public is otherwise notified. A map of the affected areas is available online: <http://ow.ly/zfKi30oPRTu>

Specifically, this prohibition applies to:

- the burning of any material (piled or unpiled) smaller than two metres high and three metres wide;
- the burning of stubble or grass over an area less than 2,000 square metres;
- the use of fireworks, firecrackers, sky lanterns, burning barrels or burning cages of any size or description; and
- the use of binary exploding targets (e.g., for rifle target practice).

The prohibition applies to all public and private land unless specified otherwise – for example, in a local government bylaw. Check with local government authorities for any other restrictions before lighting any fire.

The prohibition does not apply to larger Category 3 fires or 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 burning 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 burning 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. However, following consultations with local governments, First Nations and other stakeholders in 2018 — and the introduction of local open burning bylaws covering much of this area — the BC Wildfire Service determined that it was no longer necessary to exclude the fog zone from open fire prohibitions enacted within the BC Wildfire Service’s jurisdiction. This new approach has been introduced for the 2019 wildfire season.

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