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Open Burning Bans and Prohibitions

Category 2 and Category 3 open fire prohibitions are currently in place throughout the Coastal Fire Centre, with the exception of the “Fog Zone”. A campfire ban may also be imminent due to a lack of substantial rainfall in recent weeks.

In the Coastal Fire Centre, we have experienced hot and dry conditions that may be unprecedented for June. We now project that we will only receive 30% of the normal amount of precipitation this month. Our fire weather technician has forecast a few days of light precipitation in the coming week and then we will see a return to a drying trend. A little bit of rain will be a welcome relief, but the question is whether it will be enough to reduce fire danger ratings in the region.

So what triggers the implementation of a campfire ban? To enact any open burning prohibition, a series of benchmark requirements must be met. The Wildfire Management Branch must provide sufficient information to demonstrate that a prohibition is necessary to help prevent wildfires and protect public safety.



Campfire bans can affect recreational businesses. British Columbia relies heavily on the outdoor tourism industry and a part of that experience for many people is having a campfire. They can't imagine camping without a campfire and some may get upset when campfires are banned. While technology can't replace the full campfire experience, it can provide an alternative in the form of approved cooking stoves.

When it comes to the safety and well-being of people and forests, business interests and emotions must be put aside and tough decisions must be made. The *Wildfire Act* and the Wildfire Regulation provide the legal means for the Wildfire Management Branch to protect B.C.'s forests through the use of open burning prohibitions and they're just another tool that we use to help prevent dangerous wildfires.

Stay tuned and check out our website at www.bcwildfire.ca before leaving on your camping trip!



Important Sources for Travelers During Wildfire Season

As soon as school lets out and summer arrives, residents and visitors alike hit the roads of British Columbia to find that perfect campsite, resort or backcountry paradise. To help everyone enjoy their time on the road and in the great outdoors — and stay safe during the wildfire season — we'd like to offer some timely information.

If you hear about a wildfire in an area where you're staying or travelling through, you can learn more about it:

Wildfire Management Branch: www.bcwildfire.ca (or call 1 888 3FOREST)

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BCGovFireInfo>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo>

If you see smoke in the air, you can check air quality readings at:

www.bcairquality.ca/bluesky

For news and information about BC Parks, visit:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/>

Are you wondering if a particular road is open or obstructed? Check here:

<http://www.drivebc.ca/>

For an overview of any emergency situation in British Columbia, please go to:

<http://www.emergencyinfbc.gov.bc.ca/>

To Report a Wildfire:
1-800-663-5555
Or Cell
*5555

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To Date in Coastal

Fires to Date

Person Caused 53

Lighting Caused 23

Total Number of Fires 76

Fire Danger Rating as of June 19



Current Prohibitions (within WMB jurisdictional area)

Category 2 Open Fire (except in the Fog Zone)
Category 3 Open Fire (except in the Fog Zone)



Resorts, Campgrounds and Tourism

Many travellers first learn about a seasonal campfire prohibition when they arrive at their destination, perhaps in conversation at a tourist information centre or with staff at a campground. That's why B.C.'s resorts, campgrounds and tourist information booths are such important partners in the sharing of wildfire safety information.

When fire information officers from the Wildfire Management Branch head out into the field, one of their first stops in a community is often the local tourism information centre. Employees in these centres may talk to hundreds of people every day, so they are invaluable sources of local knowledge and they're also familiar with the opinions and concerns of the local community and of the motoring public.

That's why it's so important for fire information officers to share up-to-date wildfire information with these centres. By making the tourism information centre a regular stop during their day, officers can keep staff informed and can also bring any local concerns to the attention of a wildfire's incident commander.

There are numerous campgrounds throughout this beautiful province. Sharing up-to-date information with these businesses (especially about any campfire prohibitions that may be in effect) allows the Wildfire Management Branch to quickly disseminate important information to campers and other visitors.

At Coastal

Today is Safety Day in the Coastal Fire Centre. The day is marked with scenarios, exercises and reinforcement of safety practices at each of our bases. Safe practices and other recognition awards are given out, and often some type of social occurs to celebrate and mark the importance of WMB's commitment to safety on this day.

V60130—Elaho Fire—The Elaho fire was reported on June 14, 2015. The fire is currently 700 hectares in size. Resources on the fire include: an Incident Management Team (13), 72 firefighters, 5 helicopters, and 3 pieces of heavy equipment. This fire grew quickly due to dry conditions, fuel types and steep terrain. Visibility on this fire has been difficult. This fire is now 20% contained. This fire was human-caused but not considered to be an industry start. For more information go to Fires of Note on: www.bcwildfire.ca.

Resources from the Coastal Fire Centre who were deployed to fires in the north and those who were on fires in Alberta have now returned or are about to return to the centre.

When campground operators receive information about a campfire ban in a timely manner, they are better able to explain the reasons for the ban and can even offer to rent out propane devices to their guests.

Campgrounds, resorts and other tourist sites should have an emergency plan so they can respond appropriately if there's a problem. Many of these facilities are in areas considered to be part of the wildland-urban interface and at some point they may face the prospect of being in the path of an advancing wildfire (either one that originates nearby or has spread from another area).

- Do you operate one of these tourist facilities?
- Do you have an emergency plan?
- If you had to evacuate your customers, could you do it quickly and effectively?
- Are you prepared to take your sign-in log book with you if you are evacuated? Does it contain the cell phone numbers of any guests who are away from the site in case you need to contact them?

Wildfire safety is an important subject and should be discussed with your employees. We would like to thank everyone in the tourism industry who supports the work of the Wildfire Management Branch and does their part to educate the public.

Weather

SYNOPSIS: Patchy moisture reacts with daytime heating and weak instability today to produce isolated showers throughout each zone. A gradual trend towards sunnier and drier conditions should be seen across the majority of the region on Saturday. Two exceptions to this trend are: 1) areas on the Island north of roughly Woss and western sections of the Mid Coast where an area of moisture driven into Queen Charlotte Sound results in occasional showers and 2) northeastern sections of the Fraser zone where the tail end of an exiting upper trough could trigger the odd isolated afternoon shower or thundershower. Good recoveries tonight; fair at mid elevations in some valleys Saturday night as a light outflow pattern sets up.

OUTLOOK: Sunday should be the warmest and driest day of the next 5 with mainly sunny skies and generally light winds. Temperatures throughout interior valleys of the Island and mainland reach the upper twenties as afternoon humidities dip to near or slightly below 20% in spots. Temperatures level off or else trend slightly cooler Monday and Tuesday within a developing westerly flow aloft as winds and humidities increase slightly. Shortwave troughs rippling through the upper flow could result in the odd isolated shower early next week.