
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2017FLNR0175-001326
July 20, 2017

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

Open fire prohibitions in force in Coastal Fire Centre

PARKSVILLE – Despite open burning prohibitions being implemented in the Coastal Fire Centre (with the exception of Haida Gwaii and the area known as the “Fog Zone”), the BC Wildfire Service continues to receive reports of the current campfire ban being ignored by members of the public.

Between July 15 and 17, 2017, over 50 illegal campfires were reported to the Coastal Fire Centre. In light of these reports, enforcement will be stepped up with increased patrols by both the Compliance and Enforcement Branch and the Conservation Officers Service. Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers are also authorized to issue violation tickets under the Wildfire Act and Wildfire Regulation.

Enforcement officers will be patrolling areas with a history of open burn violations to issue tickets to people participating in any prohibited activity. A ticket for “lighting, fuelling or use of fire against regulations” carries a fine of \$1,150 and would apply to every person in the vicinity of the fire.

Where open fires are prohibited, the following activities are also prohibited:

- Open fires of woody debris in outdoor stoves
- Tiki torches, fireworks, firecrackers, sky lanterns, burning barrels or burning cages of any size or description
- The use of binary exploding targets (e.g. for rifle target practice)

The current prohibition does not apply to CSA-rated or ULC-rated cooking stoves that use gas, propane or briquettes, or to a portable campfire apparatus that uses briquettes, liquid or gaseous fuel, so long as the height of the flame is less than 15 centimetres.

If violations of open fire prohibitions continue, the B.C. government may choose to close problematic recreation sites to the public. The Coastal Fire Centre would like to remind the public about applicable fines for open burning violations:

- Section 2, Fail to report fire: \$383
- Section 3 (1), Drop, release or mishandle burning substance: \$575
- Section 3 (2), Fail to extinguish burning substance: \$575
- Section 5 (1), Light, fuel or use fire against regulations: \$1,150
- Section 5 (2) (a), Fail to extinguish fire: \$575
- Section 5 (2) (b), Fail to report fire: \$575

Anyone who lights, fuels or uses an open fire when a fire prohibition is in place or fails to

comply with an open fire prohibition may be issued a ticket for \$1,150 or, if convicted in court, be 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 subject to a penalty of up to \$100,000 and ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

For more information on fire-related fines and penalties, visit: <http://ow.ly/ZX8x30dKPLw>

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.

To report a wildfire or open burning violation, call 1 800 663-5555 toll-free or *5555 on a cellphone. For up-to-date information on current wildfire activity, burning restrictions, road closures and air quality advisories, call 1 888 3-FOREST or visit: www.bcwildfire.ca

You can also follow the latest wildfire news on:

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

Quick Facts:

- The Fog Zone is a two-kilometre strip of land along the outer coast of Vancouver Island, stretching from Owen Point (near Port Renfrew) north to the tip of Vancouver Island and around to the boundary of the District of Port Hardy. This strip extends inland two kilometres from the high tide point.
- A map of the Fog Zone is available online at: <http://ow.ly/bCJc30calul>

Contact:

Donna MacPherson or Marg Drysdale
Fire Information Officer
BC Wildfire Service
Coastal Fire Centre
250 951-4209

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect