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CURRENT STATISTICS

Fires to-date: 209

Hectares burned: 7098

Human-caused: 170

Lightning-caused: 39

BANS AND PROHIBITIONS

Campfire: Permitted in all of the Coastal Fire Centre as of noon, Sept. 16, 2021

Category 2: Lifted noon, Sept. 16

Category 3: Lifted noon, Sept. 16

Forest Use Restrictions: No Ban

See: [Prohibitions section of bcwildfire.ca](https://bcwildfire.ca/prohibitions) for full details.

Fall Arrives in the Coastal Region

Burning Prohibitions lifted in Coastal Fire Centre

This week the Coastal Fire Centre announced that effective at 12:00 (noon) Pacific Standard Time, Thursday September 16, 2021, all open fires will again be permitted throughout the Coastal Fire Centre's jurisdiction.

Residents intending to undertake burning should always check in with local authorities first, as local governments may still have their own burning restrictions in place. The public is asked to plan for any open burning and to follow guidance to ensure their burning is conducted in a safe and legal manner.

This decision to lift the prohibitions was made due to recent rainfall and the return of more seasonal temperatures to the Coast. Currently, the fire danger rating in the Coastal Fire Centre region is very low to low in all areas except for the southeastern tip of Vancouver Island, which is moderate.

The weather forecast calls for rain through the weekend, mixed with shorter periods of dry, cool conditions next week. Models predict moderate precipitation throughout September.

The hot and dry weather that was experienced by British Columbians in July and much of August also produced lightning and gusty winds. From April 1 to Sept. 10, 2021 there were 1586 wildfires province-wide. Recently, significant rain has helped to mitigate fire risk, and most of the larger fires in the province are now classified as being held or under control.

Of the 14 fires in the Coastal Fire Centre, all are now under control or being held.

As the days get shorter and nights get longer, the potential for rapid drying of the forest is greatly diminished. Recent cooler temperatures have also increased the humidity, which slows the rate of drying. All of these factors combined will significantly reduce the window of time for which wildfires are likely to start and grow.

With the lifting of the Category 3 prohibition on Sept. 16, residents can expect to see an increase in public and industrial open burning, along with approved prescribed fire projects.

To report a wildfire, unattended campfire or open burning violation, call 1 800 663-5555 tollfree or *5555 on a cellphone.

Indigenous Initial Attack crew trial born from collaboration

In August an all-Indigenous initial attack crew from the Simpcw First Nation was deployed for the first time.

The crew, whose home is near Barriere, B.C., were brought together through collaboration between the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) local governments, local businesses and the community's fire department.

Members of the crew described watching the community be impacted by wildfires in 2003 and feeling unable to help or protect their homes and said becoming wildfire fighters has empowered them to use their experience on and knowledge of the land to assist their neighbours.

Contracted through BCWS, the crew will be dispatched to fires close to home to best use their local knowledge.

It is hoped this trial will provide a road map for developing firefighting capacity within remote Indigenous communities and help BCWS and First Nations to establish and nurture strong relationships with Indigenous communities around the province.





Accessing supports after a wildfire

Experiencing a wildfire can be traumatic.

In the days, weeks and even months that follow, you and your friends or family may experience feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, sadness, fear or hopelessness, and may have nightmares or difficulty concentrating even on the simplest of tasks. These feelings are a natural reaction to living through a traumatic event and, for most people, will lessen with time and eventually disappear. But what do you do between the “now” and “then”?

The hardest part is knowing where to begin and who to contact but there are agencies in your community that can help you work through the crisis. For your immediate needs, the best first call is to your local or Indigenous government or their Emergency Operations Centre. You can also contact [Emergency Management BC](#) if you need to be pointed in the right direction.

What is Emergency Support Services?

EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS) helps preserve the well-being of British Columbians during or immediately following an emergency. Coordinated by your local government or regional district, volunteers with the ESS program help people affected by large emergencies, but may also assist during smaller emergencies such as house fires or disasters affecting a few members of a community.

They can help connect you to Emergency Support Services (or Canadian Red Cross) to help with emotional supports, temporary housing, food, medications, eyeglasses, clothing and other essential items. [EmergencyInfoBC.ca](#) has a robust listing of recovery resources specific to wildfire.

If you are forced to leave your home in an emergency, the ESS program may direct you to a reception centre or group lodging facility. Although typically offered for up to 72 hours, ESS can be available for longer depending on the emergency. Specialized services—such as health services, child-minding, pet care, transportation and emotional support or first aid—may also be available at some centres.

If your home or property was impacted by wildfire, it's also important to contact your insurance representative as soon as possible to protect yourself from further losses. Ask them what expenses you are entitled to and for how long. And hold on to the receipts for any money you spend during the time you are displaced from your home.

Your insurance representative will be able to answer questions about covering doors, windows or other exposed areas, pumping out any remaining water and whether you need to make an inventory of damaged personal property (with a description of each item and how much you paid for it).

Finally, acknowledge what you've just experienced. While it is natural to experience a wide array of feelings, it is also normal to feel numb to the emergency. You may have clicked into an auto-pilot mode to manage and mitigate, but this likely won't last forever. It's important to make plans to ensure your [mental health](#) is taken care of. While your [timeline for processing](#) this event may look different than a friend's or family member's, you aren't having these feelings alone.

A physician—whether your own, through a walk-in or through an online service—can provide counselling referrals and it's never too early to start the process following an emergency.

Your workplace may also have an Employee Assistance Program available. A counsellor or other mental health practitioner may be able to assist you in processing this traumatic event and help prepare you for the feelings that may surface in the coming days, weeks and months.

Tips for starting the claim process

- ➔ **Call** your insurance representative or company. Most insurers have a 24-hour claims service. Be as detailed as possible when providing information.
- ➔ **List** all damaged or destroyed items. If possible, assemble proofs of purchase, photos, receipts and warranties. Take photos of damage incurred and keep damaged items, unless they pose a health hazard.
- ➔ **Keep** all receipts related to cleanup and living expenses if you've been displaced. Ask your insurance representative about what expenses you may be entitled to and for what period of time.

If you do not know the name of your insurer or your insurance representative, contact **INSURANCE BUREAU OF CANADA'S CONSUMER INFORMATION CENTRE AT 1-844-2ASK-IBC**.

For More Information:

- Download the [What to Do After a Fire?](#) Booklet
- Visit the [Fire Safety](#) website
- Visit [Emergency Support Services](#) website
- Visit [Wildfire Recovery](#) website

Personal health services for staff

The BC Wildfire service values safety and well-being throughout the organization and the success of our agency is dependent upon our team. Our strong and resilient workforce strives to be adaptable, healthy, inclusive and united. Mental health support and safety and well-being are at the forefront of our priorities.

The BC Wildfire Service has multiple resources and opportunities available that have shifted to accommodate staff during heightened activity.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

The Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team, mainly comprised of volunteers, increased their capacity and representatives this year. Team members took time rotating through Fire Centres throughout the province and spent time on site at incidents and incident complexes. Having team members on site provided more opportunity for in person contact with the CISM team while still providing support over the phone.

The CISM team members provide a safe space to talk about an event, how it is impacting staff, expected responses and information for coping while an event continues or after an incident. Many staff members may be experiencing several common reactions and responses to traumatic or critical situations. These reactions can include feeling overwhelmed and helpless, fear, anxiety, worry, exhaustion, difficulty sleeping and difficulty concentrating.

LifeWorks

BC Wildfire Service staff members have access to several personal supports through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), extended benefits coverage and a Safe Reporting Line.

The BC Public Service EFAP offers short-term counselling to staff and family members. This service is available when individuals need someone to talk to right away and to get support with a short-term challenge. This service is completely confidential. As a result of this specific season, the service has been upgraded to include an alert for BC Wildfire Service staff members. Now, staff are immediately transferred to a Client Care Counsellor or flagged to receive a same-day call-back from a counsellor.

The Safe Reporting Line offers BC Wildfire Service staff members confidential access to a clinical counsellor and provides trauma informed supports that is more specifically oriented to the frontline and emergency nature of the work.

Occupational Athlete Project

The Occupational Athlete (OA) project aims to improve total worker health and reduce time-loss injuries by providing staff with Physical Training (PT) based on research, fireline job requirements, and the principles of sports medicine. The OA project has project areas such as fitness programming, functional movement screening, athletic therapy and educational information.

This year the BC Wildfire Service was able to trial the project at several of the fire camps where personnel were able to access the services of athletic and physio therapists and several registered massage therapists and chiropractors who volunteered their time, for which the BC Wildfire Service is very grateful.

Goodbye and thank you!



As of Sept. 12, all out of province resources have returned home after supporting to the BC Wildfire Service. In total, B.C. received 917 out of province resources from Alberta, Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, the North West Territories, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Yukon Territory, Australia and Mexico. In addition, B.C. received support from the Canadian Armed Forces and Parks Canada. Thank you to everyone's help and efforts this season!

Coastal Weather Forecast

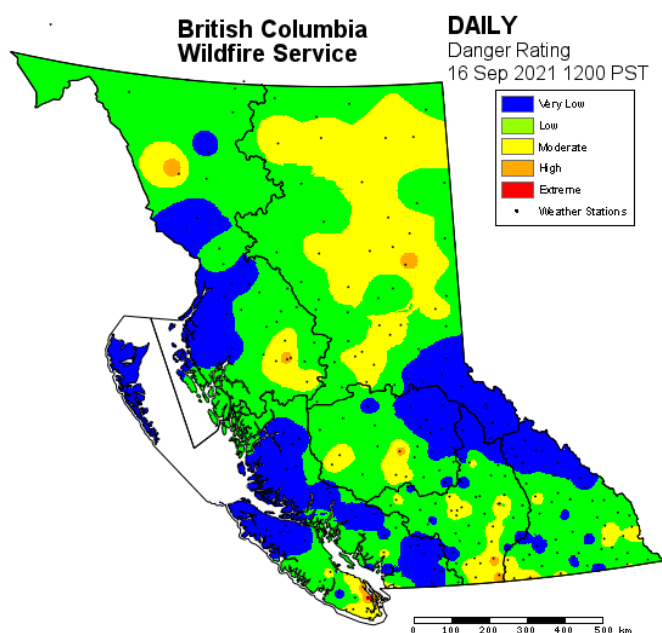
Issued: 11:15 Thursday Sept. 16, 2021

SYNOPSIS: (Today-tomorrow) An upper ridge gradually departs the Fire Centre today, with increasing cloud this afternoon ahead of an incoming system that moves through tomorrow. Rain is expected to move into the north this evening, spreading southeastward overnight and into tomorrow morning and remaining through the day tomorrow. Significant accumulations are expected out of this system as it moves through with localized flooding as well as slope stability challenges possible, with storm total accumulations running the spectrum from 20-30mm to in excess of 75mm. Seasonal temperatures and dry conditions remain for today in the south ahead of this system moving in, with temperatures trending below seasonal tomorrow throughout the Fire Centre and freezing levels still an issue into the overnight period with mixed precipitation or snow possible at higher elevations (generally above 1600m). Winds are also expected to pick up as the system moves through, with direction likely being a bit of a challenge at times as a series of weak surface troughs develop and move through ahead of tomorrow's system.

OUTLOOK: (Sunday-Monday) The pattern remains cooler and wetter, although gradual improvement is seen with only isolated to scattered shower activity as some patchy instability still streams through the Fire Centre. Another system is expected to hit northern regions which could bring some good accumulations once again, however lighter amounts are seen in the south. Temperatures remain on the cool side with no RH issues expected, and occasional patchy winds. Freezing levels will continue to be an issue as well, with mixed precipitation or snow seen at higher elevations.

6 TO 10 DAY (Tuesday – next Saturday) The pattern remains quite active in this timeframe, however seems to recover a bit with something more seasonal and drier expected through southern regions of the Fire Centre, and wetter and cooler conditions through the north as a series of ridges and

troughs go through. This pattern has been showing a lot of variation in this timeframe so overall low confidence, however.



Contact Information

Report a Wildfire: *5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555

Wildfire Information Line: 1 888 3FOREST

Burn Registration Number: 1 888 797-1717

Information Officer Phone Number: 250 951-4209

Information Officer Email:

bcws.cofcinformationofficer@gov.bc.ca