

In this Issue:

Backcountry Travel

Fireworks

Campfire Ban—
For Your Safety

Backcountry Travel

Today we're asking British Columbians to voluntarily restrict back country activities. Hot and dry weather conditions are expected to continue as we head into the long weekend. Lightning activity in some parts of the province is expected to make matters worse.

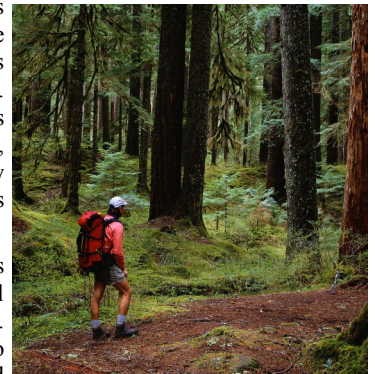
The current heat wave has left the entire province vulnerable to new fire starts, prompting the Province to take extraordinary precautions to prevent fires caused by people. All six fire centres are on high alert in anticipation of increased wildfire activity.

Since April 1, the Province has responded to 1,817 wildfires that have burned approximately 51,042 hectares of forests and grasslands. About half of those fires were human-caused. By comparison, at this point in the 2003 fire season, there were 959 fires and 31,000 hectares burned. On July 30 alone, 171 fires started, primarily from lightning.

There is currently a ban on campfires and open burning across B.C., with further restrictions possible if the high risk persists. Failure to comply with burning restrictions can result in a \$345 fine. It is vital that the public respects campfire restrictions, as crews are working to

contain a large number of naturally-occurring wildfires.

The Province is asking people to reconsider their recreational activities and avoid travelling in remote backcountry areas where access is difficult. This is especially important as it helps reduce the risk of accidental fire starts, and alleviates the risk to people should remote areas be affected by fire. Should conditions continue to worsen, formal backcountry travel restrictions will be considered.



The public reports nearly half of all wildfires in B.C. Please continue to report smoke and flames by calling toll-free 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on most cellular networks. For the latest information, visit <http://bcwildfire.ca>.

See detailed weather forecast—page 2

Campfire Ban in Place



Effective noon July 28, 2009 until further notice, campfires are banned throughout the Coastal Fire Centre, except in the following area: On the outer west coast of Vancouver Island from the ocean to 2 km inland from the high water from Port Hardy north

to Cape Scott, and southward on the west coast to Port Renfrew.

This open fire ban applies within BC Parks and all public (Crown) and private land outside of organized areas. This fire ban does not apply within municipalities or regional districts with their own burning bylaws. This ban does not restrict fires in stoves using gas, propane, or briquettes.

This restriction does apply to open flame campfire apparatus (ie. Propane, campfires, etc.). This campfire ban will be in effect until weather conditions no longer pose a threat to wildfire starts.

For more information visit:

www.bcwildfire.ca

Heat

Heat stroke and heat exhaustion are serious medical conditions that can impact your health. High temperature and humidity; direct sun or heat; limited air movement; physical exertion; poor physical condition; some medications; and inadequate tolerance to hot workplaces are factors leading to heat stress/heat-related illnesses.

It is important to know the symptoms so that you know when and how you to deal with them before the condition becomes more serious.

◆ Heat Exhaustion—headaches, dizziness, light-headedness or fainting, weakness and moist skin, mood changes such as irritability or confusion, and an upset stomach or vomiting.

◆ Heat Stroke—dry, hot skin with no sweating, mental confusion or losing consciousness, seizure or fits. ***Remember**—Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that is a medical emergency.

With the current hot, dry weather it is important to know the symptoms, stay hydrated, wear loose clothing and avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugar.



To Date
in
Coastal

Fires to Date

Person
Caused 143

Lighting
Caused 194

Total
Number
of Fires
Actioned 380

Hectares
burnt 440

Number of
Incidents
Responded
To this year 1125

Fire Danger
Rating



High—
Extreme

Be Safe!

Fire Intensity Rank System

The Fire Intensity Rank System enables fire fighters to communicate a summarized assessment of fire behaviour .

Rank 1—is a smoldering ground fire or a fire that burns in the ground fuel layer. These fires produce only white smoke.

Rank 2— is a surface fire or a fire that burns in the surface fuel layer, excluding the crowns of trees. These fires produce visible open flame; have little or no spread, which is the speed at which the fire extends; and have an unorganized flame front or a flame front that does not exhibit all the same characteristics.



Rank 3—is a vigorous surface fire with a moderate rate of spread. They have an organized front and may display ‘candling,’ which is when a tree’s fuels ignite and flare up, along the perimeter and/or within the fire.

Rank 4—fires produce grey to black smoke, have an organized surface flame front, and have a moderate to fast rate of spread along the ground. Short aerial bursts and short range spotting will occur with these fires.

Rank 5—fires produce black to copper smoke, has an organized crown fire front, moderate to long-range spotting and independent spot fire growth.

Rank 6—fires exhibit violent behavior. An organized crown fire front, moderate to long-range spotting and independent spot fire growth are characteristic of this fire type. There may be the presence of fireballs and whirls.



Fireworks

- ◆ Fireworks are considered to be a ‘high risk activity’ and are subject to specific requirements under the Wildfire Act.
- ◆ Fireworks and pyrotechnics are restricted throughout the Coastal Fire Centre.
- ◆ Exemptions for the use of fireworks for special events may be considered on a case by case basis.
- ◆ Municipalities or Fire Departments that are interested in seeking an exemption should contact the Coastal Fire Centre through the website:



www.bcwildfire.ca

Weather Forecast

A strong ridge of high pressure remains fixed along the BC Coast while a thermal trough lies over Vancouver Island. The air mass is quite unstable and lightning is likely throughout the region. Record high temperatures will continue.
Today’s Forecast is mainly sunny with a risk of lightning throughout the region. High 32-36. Low Relative Humidity 20-30%. Winds will be light except in areas of thunderstorms. Chance of lightning today is 40%.
Tomorrow’s Forecast is mainly sunny with Highs between 30-35. Low Relative Humidity 55-65% with light winds. Chance of lightning in the Whistler-Pemberton, North Island, Mid-Coast and the Fraser Canyon.
 With an increased chance of lightning strikes, the Coastal Fire Centre is asking the public to be vigilant.

Observe, Record, Report!