
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
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Sept. 9, 2016

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

Open fires to be allowed in parts of the Southeast

CASTLEGAR – Effective at noon Pacific Time on Sept. 9, 2016, Category 2 open fires will once again be permitted in the Columbia, Arrow and Kootenay Lake fire zones of the Southeast Fire Centre, due to a decreased risk of wildfire in those areas.

However, the Category 2 prohibition will remain in effect in the Boundary, Cranbrook and Invermere fire zones, since warmer temperatures and windy conditions are expected in those regions. Category 3 open fires are still prohibited throughout the Southeast Fire Centre.

A map of the affected areas is available online at: <http://ow.ly/7UzJ3043TLu>

Category 2 burning allows for up to two concurrently burning piles no larger than two metres high by three metres wide, or the burning of stubble or grass over an area of less than 0.2 hectares. Category 2 open burning also allows for the use of fireworks, burn barrels, exploding binary targets and sky lanterns.

To learn more about open burning categories, fire bans and fire restrictions, please visit: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/fire-bans-and-restrictions>

The BC Wildfire Service is asking people to take the following precautions with any permitted outdoor burning:

- Ensure that enough people, water and tools are on hand to control the fire and to prevent it escaping.
- Do not burn in windy conditions. The weather can change quickly and the wind may carry embers to other combustible material and start new fires.
- Create a fireguard around the planned fire site by clearing away twigs, grass, leaves and other combustible material.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Make sure that your fire is fully extinguished and the ashes are cold to the touch before you leave the area for any length of time.

In British Columbia, the Wildfire Act specifies a person's legal obligations when using open fire on or within one kilometre of forest land or grassland.

Anyone who lights, fuels or uses a Category 2 or Category 3 open fire must comply with the Environmental Management Act and the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation. They also must check local venting conditions before conducting an open burn. If conditions are rated "poor" or "fair", open burning is restricted. The venting index can be found at:

<http://ow.ly/zt633043Wbi>

The Southeast Fire Centre encompasses the area extending from the United States border in the south to Mica Dam in the north, and from the Okanagan Highlands or Monashee Mountains in the west to the B.C.-Alberta border in the east. The Southeast Fire Centre includes the Selkirk and Rocky Mountain natural resource districts.

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>

You can also follow the latest wildfire news on:

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

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