



TOWN OF CRESTON CRESTON FIRE RESCUE

OPEN BURNING PERMIT INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

Outdoor burning is allowed with restrictions within the Town of Creston as per *Fire Service Bylaw No. 1674, 2008*.

This document provides guidelines and regulations for property owners to understand the restrictions regarding open burning within the community. It is the property owner and the person performing the burning responsibility to comply with the *Fire Services Bylaw No. 1674, 2008*, and provincial regulations such as the *Environmental Protection Act*, *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation* and the *Wildfire Act*.

The issuance of a permit does not protect the property owner or person performing the burning from liability or from provincial penalties for not conforming to any of the above mentioned provincial regulations.

The Fire Chief may ban open burning of all fires if conditions are not safe for the duration of those conditions, even if there is no provincial fire ban in place.

For all fires, regardless of size, there shall be No burning of prohibited materials such as asphalt, asphalt products, biomedical waste, demolition waste, domestic waste, drywall, manure, fuel or lubricant containers, paint, tar paper, plastics, railway ties, rubber, special waste, treated lumber or tires.

Recreational Fires:

Recreational fires consist only of charcoal or firewood used for cooking or pleasure, and is less than 1 meter (3 feet) across and less than .5 metres (2 feet) high. Recreational fires shall conform to the following criteria;

- The fire shall be in an enclosure no larger than 0.9 metres (3 feet) across. The enclosure must be a minimum of 40 centimeters (16 inches) high and made of cement block, stones or #10 gauge steel with a screen on top to prevent and minimize embers.
- Materials being burned must be kept lower than the sidewalls of the enclosure.
- A charged garden hose or 2 x 20 litre (five US gallon) buckets of water must be on site near the fire and ready for use.
- A shovel or rake must be on site near the fire and ready for use.
- The fire must be 7.5 meters (25 feet) from any standing timber / tree line.
- Tree branches must be cleared to the height of 4.5 metres (15 feet) above the enclosure.
- Burning must be in open areas, no closer than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from combustibles, such as standalone trees, coniferous shrubs, fences and buildings.
- One person 19 years or older who is capable of putting the fire out must be in attendance at all times.
- The fire and enclosure must be contained within a firebreak (bare ground) of at least 1 metre (3 feet).
- The landowner's permission must be obtained if not on your property, particularly rental properties.
- No yard waste can be burned on the fire at anytime unless with burning permit.
- Fire shall be extinguished if smoke is a nuisance to neighbours immediately.



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Residential Fires:

Fires no larger than 1 square metre (3 sq feet) and 50 centimetres in height (2 feet) high require a burning permit obtained at the fire department or town hall for a fee of \$10.

Residential fires shall only consist of leaves, clipping, pruning debris and other yard & garden debris that are generated on the property. Residential fires shall conform to the following criteria;

- Fires shall not exceed 1 metre in width and 50 centimetres in height.
- A shovel or rake must be on site near the fire and ready for use.
- One person age 19 or older who is capable of putting the fire out must be in attendance at all times and shall have a method to call 911 if needed.
- Only one pile may be burned at a time unless permitted otherwise.
- Do not burn during periods of air stagnation.
- All fires must be contained within a firebreak (bare ground). The firebreak must equal the size of the pile.
- Burning must be in open areas, no closer than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from combustibles, such as standalone trees, coniferous shrubs, fences and buildings.
- The fire must be 15 metres (50') from standing timber / tree line.
- No burning for periods longer than 4 hours at a time.
- Burning in daylight hours only.
- Fires must have a charged garden hose capable of reaching the fire on site near the fire and ready for use.
- The landowner's permission must be obtained if not on your property, particularly rental properties.
- For piles over 1 metre in size or all fires on commercial property must have a *Large Fire* permit.
- Fire shall be extinguished if smoke is a nuisance to neighbours immediately.

Free Standing Grass & Underbrush Fires:

Permit only valid for the burning of free standing grass or underbrush. Burning permits may be obtained at the fire department or town hall for a fee of \$40.

Free standing grass & underbrush fires consist of the burning of grassy areas and underbrush away from free standing timber. Due to the nature of burning freestanding grass & underbrush the permit holder shall strictly conform to the following criteria;

- Burning shall be done in small controllable areas with a minimum of two adults to prevent rapid fire spread. The adults must be 19 years of age or older and be capable of putting the fire out in the event the fire begins to spread and shall have a method to call 911 if needed.
- Clearing of fuels (grass & underbrush) away from property lines, combustibles such as fences, trees and structures shall be done prior to commencing burning to prevent fire spread.



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- Wet areas around combustibles, such as fences, trees and structures with a garden hose prior to burning to ensure fire control.
- A shovel or rake must be on site for each of the two adults performing the burning.
- Water must be on site and set up for immediate use:
 - o Fires shall have a charged garden hose capable of reaching the fire and potential areas within the property where fire may spread.
 - o Alternatively to a garden hose, a minimum of a 220 litres water source with a pump can be utilized with enough hose capable of reaching the fire and potential areas within the property where fire may spread.
- Raked piles developed from clearing grass away from combustibles may be burnt using the criteria listed above under *Residential Fires* and not to exceed 1 metre in size.
- Do not burn during periods of air stagnation.
- Burning must be in open areas, no closer than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from combustibles, such as standalone trees, coniferous shrubs, fences and buildings.
- No burning for periods longer than 4 hours at a time.
- Burning in daylight hours only.
- The landowner's permission must be obtained if not on your property, particularly rental properties.

Note: *Burning of grass and underbrush carries a high risk of rapid fire growth and spread. Property owners who wish to partake is liable for any damages caused to other property and may be held responsible for fire response costs by the Town of Creston.*

Large Pile Fires

Fires larger than 1 square metre (3 sq feet) and 50 centimetres in height (2 feet) high require a *Large Fire* burning permit obtained at the fire department or town hall for a fee of \$75.

Large pile fires may consist of leaves, clipping, pruning debris and other yard & garden debris that are generated on the property. Large pile fires also apply to the burning of all industrial and commercial waste and land clearing (see additional information regarding land clearing).

- Fires may exceed 1 metre in width and 50 centimetres in height.
- Only one pile can be burn at a time due to the limit firefighting equipment required. Once one pile has been burnt, a second may be lit if required.
- Any fire size exceeding 3 metres (9 feet) in diameter is required to have an onsite inspection by the fire department prior to the issuance of a burning permit.
- A shovel or rake must be on site near the fire and ready for use.
- Two people 19 years or older who is capable of putting the fire out must be in attendance at all times and shall have a method to call 911 if needed.



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- Water must be on site:
 - o Fires less than 1.2 metres (4 feet) must have a charged garden hose capable of reaching the fire or 10 gallons of water and a bucket.
 - o Fires 1.2 to 3 metres (9 feet) must have a charged garden hose or a 220 litre (55-gallon) water source with a pump and enough hose capable of reaching the fire.
- Only one pile may be burned at a time unless permitted otherwise.
- Do not burn during periods of air stagnation.
- All fires must be contained within a firebreak (bare ground). The firebreak created around the fire must equal the size of the pile. *Eg. – 2 metre high pile must have a minimum of a two metre fire break.*
- Commercial and industrial waste cannot be prohibited materials, but may consist of wood product waste generated through the course of business activities.
- Burning must be in open areas, no closer than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from combustibles, such as standalone trees, coniferous shrubs, fences and buildings.
- The fire must be 15 metres (50') from standing timber / tree line.
- No burning for periods longer than 4 hours at a time.
- Burning in daylight hours only.
- Fires must have a charged garden hose capable of reaching the fire on site near the fire and ready for use.
- The landowner's permission must be obtained if not on your property, particularly rental properties.
- All *Large Pile* fires shall conform to the *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation* and the *Environmental Protection Act* as set forth by the provincial government. On the day of burning, the property owner shall call for the *VENTILATION INDEX* to obtain the smoke control forecast.
- Burning of large piles, commercial or industrial waste must be done a minimum of 100 metres (325 feet) from any occupied residence and shall be 500 metres from any schools in session, hospitals and continuing care facilities.
- Upon inspection by the fire department of any pile, additional requirements may be made to ensure the safe burning of materials.

Land Clearing Burning (minimum requirements):

All land clearing fires require a *Large Pile* permit and consist of natural vegetation generated from on site land-clearing projects. All options on removal of debris from property should be considered and not assumed that burning permits will be issued for all land clearing burning.

- No pile size shall exceed 6 metres (20 feet) in diameter.
- A site plan must be provided to the fire department showing piles, dimensions of piles, locations, distances from property lines, location of firefighting equipment and supplies.
- A bulldozer or excavator with an operator shall be on site at all times during the burning.
- A high volume fan must be used to start the fire and assist with burning.
- All fires must be contained within a firebreak (bare ground). The firebreak must equal the size of the pile.
- The fire must be 15 metres (50 feet) from any structure, standing timber or power lines.



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- The landowner's permission must be obtained if not on your property.
- Burning of land clearing waste must be done a minimum of 100 metres (325 feet) from any occupied residence and shall be 500 metres from any schools in session, hospitals and continuing care facilities.
- Smoke release from the fire shall not exceed 72 consecutive hours.
- All *Large Pile* fires shall conform to the *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation* and the *Environmental Protection Act* as set forth by the provincial government. On the day of burning, the property owner shall call for the *VENTILATION INDEX* to obtain the smoke control forecast.

Land Clearing Burning (minimum equipment / workers):

- Any person carrying out fire control for a fire in one or two piles not exceeding 2 metres (6.5 feet) height and 3 metres (9 feet in width) shall have the following equipment & personnel available on site during all burning activities (minimum requirements of the BC Wildfire Act, as a defined category 2 fire);
 - o One piece of heavy equipment
 - o One fire suppression system with a minimum of a 1500 L (350 gallon) water source and enough 1.5" hose to reach the entire fire.
 - o Six workers, each equipped with at least one fire fighting hand tool (shovel, rakes, Pulaski axe)
- Any person carrying out fire control for a fire in three or more piles not exceeding 2 metres (6.5 feet) height and 3 metres (9 feet in width) or one or two piles exceeding 2 metres (6.5 feet) height and 3 metres (9 feet in width) to a maximum of 6 metres in diameter (20 feet) shall have the following equipment & personnel available on site during all burning activities (minimum requirements of the BC Wildfire Act, as a defined category 3 fire);
 - o Two pieces of heavy equipment
 - o Two fire suppression systems with a minimum of a 1500 L (350 gallon) water source and enough 1.5" hose to reach the entire fire.
 - o 11 workers, each equipped with at least one fire fighting hand tool (shovel, rakes, Pulaski axe)

General Outdoor Burning Rules

What can be burned? It is only legal to burn natural vegetation or firewood – not even paper is allowed, except for the amount necessary to start a fire.

Burn Barrels – the use of burn barrels is prohibited.

Construction and demolition debris - No material resulting from a construction, renovation or demolition project can legally be burned.

Nuisance – Smoke, odor or ash that unreasonably impacts neighboring properties is prohibited.

It is illegal to burn any material that is not generated on site or is hauled from an area where burning of the materials is prohibited.



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Commercial businesses – Burning at permanently located commercial establishments is permitted with *Large Fire* permits only and allows the burning of wood waste product generated through the course of business operation.

Burning is allowed during daylight hours only (except recreational fires) unless otherwise permitted by the Fire Chief, such as land clearing.

Do not burn during periods of air stagnation. It is the person performing the burning responsibility to check the weather and ventilation index as per the *Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation* within the province of BC.

Burn only when winds do not exceed 7-10 mph. Any loss of control of the fire is the responsibility of the property owner and may result in liability to property damage and fire department response costs.

Burning is not allowed during a burn ban. If the BC Forest Service restricts burning within the province, burning of the same categories is prohibited within municipal boundaries, even if the ban is during the months of April or October which the municipality permits burning.

YOU MAY BE CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION TICKET IF YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT IS CALLED OUT TO YOUR FIRE DUE TO ILLEGAL BURNING.

Types of Burning Bans:

- Burn ban due to impaired air quality is a temporary ban on outdoor burning called by the Ministry of Environment.
- Municipal Burn Ban due to dry weather conditions is a temporary ban on outdoor burning called by a fire official during periods of high fire danger.
- Provincial Burn Ban due to dry weather conditions is a temporary ban on outdoor burning called by the BC Forest Service during periods of high fire danger and supersedes all local burning bylaws.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ALL EMERGENCIES – DIAL 9-1-1

Creston Fire Rescue (non-emergency)
(250) 428-4321

Town of Creston Municipal Hall
(250) 428-2214

Ministry of Forest
1-800-663-5555 (reporting of wildfires)
1-888-336-7378 (fire information line)

Ventilation Index
1-888-281-2992
Ventilation Index Online
www.bcairquality.ca/readings/ventilation-index.html
Ministry of Environment (Cranbrook Office)
(250) 489-8540

www.bcwildfire.ca