
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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July 20, 2010

Ministry of Forests and Range

CAMPFIRES PROHIBITED ACROSS THE COASTAL FIRE CENTRE

PARKSVILLE – Effective noon July 23, all open burning, including campfires and fireworks, will be prohibited across the Coastal Fire Centre to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety.

This ban applies to open fires of any size, campfires, fireworks, tiki torches and burning barrels. The ban does not apply to cooking stoves that use gas, propane or briquettes, or to portable campfire apparatus with a CSA or ULC rating using briquettes, liquid or gaseous fuel, that are not capable of producing a flame longer than 15 centimetres. Portable campfire apparatus that do not meet these conditions are prohibited.

This prohibition is necessary due to dry forest fuels and a forecast for a prolonged period without substantial rain. The public is urged to exercise caution on forested land with any activity that could lead to a wildfire. Please discard cigarettes carefully and limit movement of ATVs and motorcycles through tall grass and undergrowth.

This ban covers all BC Parks, Crown and private lands, but does not apply within the boundaries of local governments that have forest fire prevention bylaws and are serviced by a fire department. Please check with civic authorities for any restrictions before lighting a fire.

Campfires in the West Vancouver Island Fog Zone are exempt from this prohibition. The West Vancouver Island Fog Zone is a stretch of land two kilometres inland from the high-tide mark from Owen Point in the south, northward along the outer coast of Vancouver Island, around Cape Scott Provincial Park and southward to the boundary of the District of Port Hardy.

A map of the exempted area is available at
http://bcwildfire.ca/ftp!/Project/WildfireNews/7202010~102943_Fog%20Zone%20Map.jpg

Anyone found in violation of an open fire ban, including campfires, may be issued a ticket for \$345. Should a wildfire occur as a result of recklessness, a person can be fined up to \$1 million, or spend three years in prison and be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

The ban will be in place until the public is otherwise notified.

The Coastal Fire Centre is responsible for wildfire response for about 2.1 million hectares of land. Geographically, the centre covers all the area west of the height of land on the Coast Mountain range from the U.S./Canada border at Manning Park to Tweedsmuir Park in the north, the Sunshine Coast, the Lower Mainland, all of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

To report a wildfire or unattended campfire please call *5555 on your cellphone or toll-free to 1 800 663-5555.

For the latest information on fire activity, conditions and prohibitions, visit the Wildfire Management Branch website at www.bcwildfire.ca.

For Facebook and Twitter updates, as well as details about evacuation orders and alerts, road conditions and air quality advisories, go to www.firesafebc.ca.

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For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.



CAMPFIRE Q&A 2010

COASTAL FIRE CENTRE

Q & A

When did the campfire prohibition start?

The campfire prohibition was put in place on July 23, 2010 at noon.

Where does it apply?

This ban applies throughout the Coastal Fire Centre, within our jurisdictional area. We are allowing campfires within the West Vancouver Island Fog Zone, as well.

Our jurisdiction is over any public or private land that does not have a local open fire bylaw put in place by the Regional District or Municipality. It includes all BC Parks, Federal Parks, Gulf Islands and gulf tidal lands outside of local open fire bylaws.

What is the West Vancouver Island Fog Zone?

The West Vancouver Island Fog Zone is a stretch of land two kilometres inland from the high tide mark from Owen Point in the south, northward along the outer coast of Vancouver Island, around Cape Scott Provincial Park and southward to the boundary of the District of Port Hardy (see the attached map)

What else is prohibited?

Fireworks and tiki torches are also prohibited. A Tiki torch means a portable torch like device that burns gaseous or liquid fuel supported by a stick like structure that is driven into the ground or affixed to a small base. Tiki torches that are permanently mounted (cemented) are permitted.

What can I use when I go camping or picnicking?

Camp stoves using propane, gas and briquettes are permitted. Propane campfires are also permitted, as long as they are CSA or ULC rated and cannot produce a flame length of over 15 centimetres (about 6 inches).

Are campfires allowed in supervised campgrounds?

If the campground is outside of a local open fire bylaw, our prohibition applies, and campfires are not permitted.

Are municipal parks and private campsites included in the ban?

Yes, but only if they are located outside of a local government or regional district open fire bylaw.

Are beach fires included in the ban?

Yes, unless they are within a local government or regional district open fire bylaw. The only exception is within the West Vancouver Island Fog Zone.

What are the fines that could be levied for contravening the campfire prohibition?

Anyone found in violation of an open fire ban, including campfires, may be issued a ticket for \$345.

Should a wildfire occur as a result of recklessness, a person can be fined up to \$1 million, or spend three years in prison and be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

What is a campfire?

The definition of a campfire under the Wildfire Act and Regulation is "an open fire that burns piled woody material no larger than 0.5m in height and 0.5 m in width, and is lit, fuelled or used by any person for recreational purpose or by a first nation for ceremonial purpose."

When are campfire bans implemented?

Campfire bans are put into effect when forest fuels and weather conditions indicate easy ignition of forest fuels, and when human-caused fires from campfires have increased or would divert needed resources from fighting naturally occurring wildfires.

The campfire ban will be in effect until weather conditions no longer pose a threat to wildfire starts. Substantial rainfall is needed to reduce the threat of wildfire starts.

How do I find out about campfire bans and restrictions?

You can check to see if a Ministry of Forests and Range campfire ban is currently in effect by visiting www.bcwildfire.ca.

These requirements are outlined in more detail in Section 20 (Category 1 Open Fire) of the Wildfire Regulation.

