
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2015FLNR0159-001013
July 3, 2015

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

Campfires, open fires and fireworks banned throughout B.C.

KAMLOOPS – Effective at noon (Pacific time) on Friday, July 3, 2015, all open burning, including campfires and fireworks, will be prohibited throughout the majority of the province, Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Minister Steve Thomson announced today.

This prohibition will remain in place until the public is otherwise notified.

This extraordinary step is being taken to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety. Unseasonably hot and dry weather is being experienced around the province and any preventable, human-caused fires divert critical personnel and resources from other incidents. The BC Wildfire Service is responding to over 150 active fires in the province.

Campfires will still be allowed in the area known as the "Fog Zone" along the western coast of Vancouver Island. A map of the area covered by this open burning prohibition and campfire ban is available online at: <http://bit.ly/1lyUZG4>

This ban applies to:

- open fires of any size, including campfires;
- the use of fireworks, sky lanterns and tiki torches;
- burning barrels or burning cages of any size or description;
- the use of binary exploding targets (e.g., for rifle target practice); and
- the use of air curtain burners (forced-air burning systems).

This prohibition does not apply to cooking stoves that use gas, propane or briquettes. It also does not apply to a portable campfire apparatus with a CSA or ULC rating that uses briquettes, liquid or gaseous fuel, with a flame length of 15 centimetres or less. The use of this equipment may be prohibited locally and at a later time if deemed necessary so check "current fire bans" online at: www.bcwildfire.ca The use of a portable campfire apparatus that does not meet the conditions noted above is prohibited.

This prohibition 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.

The "Fog Zone" is a two-kilometre-wide strip along the outer coast of Vancouver Island, stretching from Owen Point (near Port Renfrew) north to the tip of Vancouver Island and

around to the boundary of the District of Port Hardy. This strip extends inland two kilometres from the high-tide point. A map of the Fog Zone is available online at: <http://bit.ly/1GMvwnU>

Anyone found in contravention of an open burning prohibition may be issued a ticket for \$345, required to pay an administrative penalty of \$10,000 or, if convicted in court, fined up to \$100,000 and/or sentenced to one year in jail. If the contravention causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

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

Quote:

Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Steve Thomson –

“We’re committed to safeguarding B.C.’s families, natural resources and infrastructure from wildfires. Given the hot and dry conditions in most of the province, we are implementing this provincewide campfire ban to help protect our communities.”

Learn more:

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>
- On Facebook at: <http://facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo>

Media Contacts:

Greig Bethel
Media Relations
Ministry of Forests, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations
250 356-5261

Kevin Skrepnek
Chief Fire Information Officer
BC Wildfire Service
250 312-3051

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