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## INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release  
June 18, 2020

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations  
& Rural Development  
BC Wildfire Service

### **Open fire prohibitions to be lifted across the Northwest Fire Centre**

SMITHERS – Effective at 12:00 noon, Pacific Daylight Time on Thursday, June 18, 2020, Category 2 and Category 3 open fires, as well as Resource Management open fires (prescribed burning) will be permitted throughout the Northwest Fire Centre.

A map of the Northwest Fire Centre is available [here](#).

These activities have been prohibited provincewide since mid-April to reduce demands on firefighting resources and protect the health and safety of the public and BC Wildfire Service staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of June, much of the province received significant precipitation, decreasing the risk that fires could escape and require the BC Wildfire Service to respond. The BC Wildfire Service has implemented protocols to limit interactions with the public when responding to wildfires to protect its staff and the public.

The public is strongly encouraged to exercise caution with any outdoor burning and campfire use. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that burning is done in a safe and responsible manner in accordance with regulations. Before lighting any fire, check with local government authorities to see if any local burning restrictions are in place.

#### **Category 2 open fire:**

Category 2 open fires will be permitted throughout the Northwest Fire Centre. Category 2 fires include:

- one or two concurrently burning piles no larger than two metres high by three metres wide;
- stubble or grass burning over an area of less than 0.2 hectares in size;
- the use of fireworks;
- burn barrels and burn cages;
- sky lanterns; and
- exploding binary targets.

#### **Reminders about Category 2 open fire:**

Anyone planning to conduct Category 2 open burning should always check the [Ventilation Index](#), follow the [Open Burning Smoke Control Regulations](#) and practice safe burning. Create a fireguard around the planned fire site by clearing away twigs, grass, leaves and other combustible material. Have an adequate source of pressurized water on hand. Never leave a fire unattended and make sure the fire is fully extinguished with ashes cold to the touch before leaving the area for any length of time.

More information on Category 2 open fire safety: <http://ow.ly/qLxI50A9qTN>

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### Category 3 open fire:

Category 3 open fires will be permitted throughout the Northwest Fire Centre. Category 3 fires include:

- any fire larger than two metres high by three metres wide;
- three or more concurrently burning piles each no larger than two metres high by three metres wide;
- the burning of stubble or grass over an area greater than 0.2 hectares; and
- the burning of one or more windrows.

Anyone wishing to light a Category 3 open fire **must obtain** a burn registration number ahead of time by calling 1-888-797-1717. A burn registration number is not required to light a Category 2 open fire.

### Reminders about Category 3 open burning:

All Category 3 open fires must comply with the [Environmental Management Act](#) and the [Open Burning Smoke Control Regulations](#). This requires individuals to check local venting conditions prior to lighting a fire and to understand all other obligations associated with these regulations.

A poster explaining the different categories of open burning and applicable regulations is available online: [www.gov.bc.ca/openfireregs](http://www.gov.bc.ca/openfireregs).

To report a wildfire or an open burning violation, call \*5555 on a cell phone or 1-800-663-5555 toll-free. For the latest information on current wildfire activity, burning restrictions, road closures and air quality advisories, visit <http://www.bcwildfire.ca>

Follow the latest wildfire news on:

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

### Contact:

Fire Information  
Northwest Fire Centre  
B.C. Wildfire Service  
[BCWS.NWFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca](mailto:BCWS.NWFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca)  
250-847-6639