



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.

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."

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 the operator maintains a flame length of less than 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 "chimeneas" or outdoor fireplaces permitted during the campfire ban?

Chimeneas or outdoor fireplaces are considered a form of open burning, as they burn woody debris. In the regulation, the only exclusion to fires that burn woody debris is: "open fire does not include fire vented through a structure that has a flue and is incorporated in a building".

Chimeneas are freestanding (traditionally clay) burners with short flues.

Outdoor fireplaces are typically surrounded with metal lath with some kind of chimney attachment, and do not go through a structure and incorporated in a building.

Therefore, when a campfire prohibition comes into effect, this type of open burning is 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.



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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.

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.

