



News Release

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September 28, 2011

New Open Burning Phone Number starting October 15th

The continued moderate to high fire hazard means a later start for those eligible to conduct open burning. Central Okanagan fire chiefs have decided to begin issuing permits for open burning starting October 15th.

When the season begins in the Central Okanagan, there will be a new twist.

Before lighting any fire, eligible property owners with a valid permit must call a **new toll-free Outdoor Burning Hotline: 1-855-262-2876 (BURN)**. It will tell them if open burning is allowed on a particular day. Both the Venting and Air Quality must be good in order for burning to occur within Central Okanagan fire jurisdictions.

Under the Regional District Smoke Control Bylaw, creating nuisance smoke from open burning is not allowed in the City of Kelowna, the District of Lake Country, District of West Kelowna and the Central Okanagan East and West Electoral Areas or under the bylaws of the District of Peachland.

Violators could receive a fine or be charged with the cost of putting out the fire. Residents are encouraged to report anyone illegally burning on a non-burning day by calling the Fire Department Dispatch Center at 250-469-8577.

Fire authorities throughout the region will begin issuing permits effective October 15th for those property owners that qualify to burn yard waste outdoors. Under Regional District and local fire bylaws, permitted open burning must be complete by April 30th. Fire chiefs may however change the date depending on the fire hazard in their area.

Starting October 15th, those people with properties greater than one hectare will be allowed to burn outdoors, but only after receiving a permit from their local fire authority and only after calling the Outdoor Burning Hotline to confirm both air and venting conditions are favourable. Farmers and large lot owners must also follow any regulations before lighting any fire.

Eligible property owners within the Central Okanagan East or the Central Okanagan West electoral areas may obtain a permit by calling the Regional District at 250-469-6223 (Long Distance Collect Calls are accepted) weekdays only between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, excluding holidays. All other eligible property owners must obtain a permit from their municipal fire department.

All Central Okanagan property owners regardless of property size are encouraged to take advantage of other options to dispose of their yard waste. The bi-weekly curbside

yard waste collection program is underway through the end of November and residents are reminded to only place leaves, grass, pine needles and small prunings inside their wheeled yard waste cart with the green lid closed. Residents may also choose to use the year-round free yard waste program at either the Glenmore landfill (Open seven days a week 7:30 am to 4:45 pm) or at the Westside Residential Waste Disposal Centre (Open 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Friday through Monday). Yard waste and pruning's weighing up to 250 kilograms (550 pounds) and 20 centimetres or less in diameter may be dropped off for free at either location. When transporting loads for disposal, please make sure they are covered. Loads exceeding the maximum weight will be charged \$25.00 per ton (\$40 as of January 1st, 2012) as long as the yard waste is separated from regular garbage. As well, a number of private companies offer wood chipping and grinding services or rent portable chippers. Some may also pick up yard waste for disposal.

Most of the burning permits that are issued in the Central Okanagan are for agricultural burning, which is allowed under Provincial Right to Farm legislation. However, farmers must also call the new Outdoor Burning Hotline to ensure burning is allowed before starting any fire. The Regional Air Quality Program is working with farmers to encourage the use of the Agricultural Chipping Program as an alternate disposal method.

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Contact:

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Regional Air Quality Coordinator
250-469-8408

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Communications Coordinator
250-469-6339

Fire Department Jurisdictions for Permits

- Central Okanagan East or Central Okanagan West Electoral Areas (Ellison, Joe Rich, Wilson's Landing, North Westside residents):
 - Call the Regional District (250-469-6223 weekdays only 8:00 am – 4:00 pm excluding holidays)
 - Note: North Westside residents may call 'Collect' or avoid long distance charges by using a cellular phone. They may also contact North Westside Fire/Rescue at 250-545-1195 to obtain a permit.
- City of Kelowna residents contact - Kelowna Fire Department 250-469-8801
- Lake Country residents contact - Lake Country Fire Department 250-766-2327
- Peachland residents contact - Peachland Fire Rescue Service 250-767-2841
- West Kelowna residents contact – West Kelowna Fire/Rescue 250-769-1640
All West Kelowna municipal burning permits will be issued from Lakeview Station
32, 2708 Olalla Road