

**Comox Valley  
Regional District  
Airshed Round Table**

**Open Burning  
Presentation**



## Provincial Jurisdiction

Open burning on provincial crown land is regulated under the Wildfire Regulation and Act. The Wildfire Regulation applies on private land and within a local government jurisdiction when;

- There is no structural fire department assigned/responsible to respond to fire(s) in a given area (IE. No formal Fire Protection Area)
- Or, when there is a structural fire department assigned/responsible to respond to fire(s) in a given area (Fire Protection Area or Improvement Area), but no Local Government open fire bylaws exist in the Fire Protection/Improvement Area. IE. Union Bay

# Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation (OBSCR)

- The OBSCR may apply to several categories of open fire use when fuel(s) diameter exceeds 3 cm (partial) or 10 cm (full), be it in a local government jurisdiction or provincial jurisdiction
- Local government may have smoke management bylaws that exceed OBSCR requirements
- The OBSCR addresses environmental conditions (venting) and fuel conditions (cure/moisture content) requirements for open burning

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/air/air-pollution/smoke-burning/regulations/openburningregulation>





# Open Burning Fire Types & the OBSCR

Campfires – no  
OBSCR

Category 2 – OBSCR  
may apply

Category 3 – OBSCR  
may apply

Resource  
Management Open  
Fire – no OBSCR



# Campfires

- Campfires: A campfire is an open fire that burns piled material no larger than 0.5 m in height and 0.5 m in width and is used by any person for recreational purpose, or by a First Nation for a ceremonial purpose.
- Note: OBSCR does not apply to campfires



## Category 2 Open Fire

material in one pile not exceeding 2 m in height and 3 m in width,

material concurrently in 2 piles each not exceeding 2 m in height and 3 m in width, or

stubble or grass over an area that does not exceed 0.2 ha.

**The OBSCR may apply to category 2 open burning if fuel diameters exceed 3cm (partial) or 10 cm (full)**

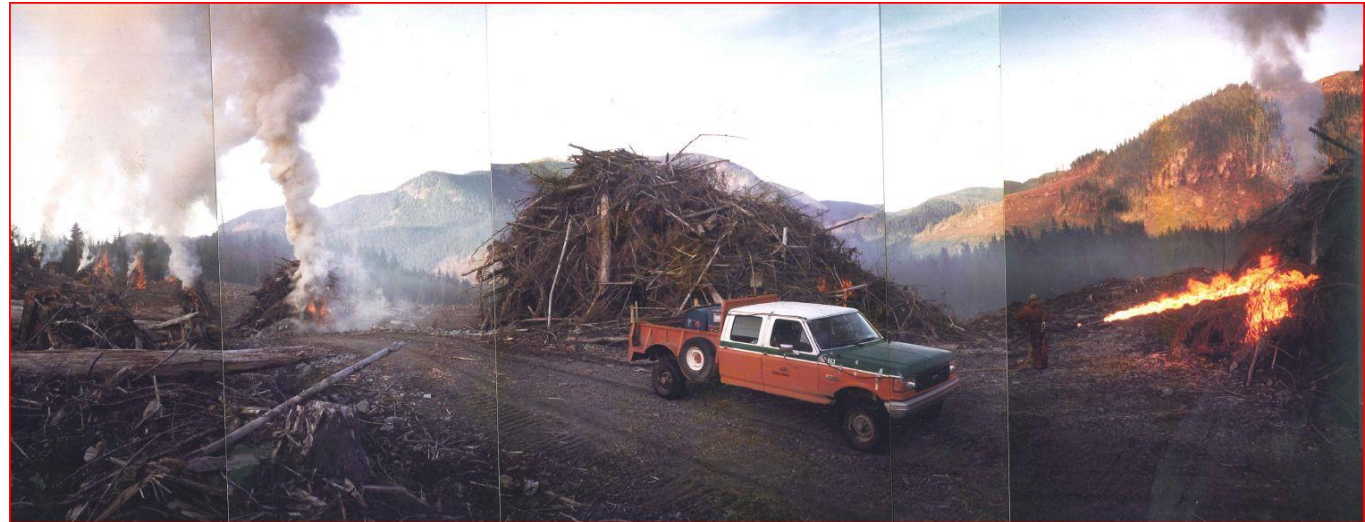
Category 2 open fire use is most often associated with backyard burning





# Category 3 Open Fire

- material concurrently in 3 or more piles each not exceeding 2 m in height and 3 m in width,
- material in one or more piles each exceeding 2 m in height or 3 m in width,
- one or more windrows, or
- stubble or grass over an area exceeding 0.2 ha
- **The OBSCR may apply to category 3 open burning if fuel diameters exceed 3 or 10 cm**
- Category 3 open fires are most often associated with Industry burning. IE. Forestry, farming, land development/clearing. Note: The majority of cat. 3 burning in the CVRD is conducted under the West Coast Fuel Smoke Management Plan



# Resource Management Open Fire

a fire that burns un-piled slash over an area of any size; or

a fire that is not a campfire, Category 2 open fire or Category 3 open fire

Most often associated with ecosystem restoration, habitat enhancement, large scale wildfire risk reduction, silviculture and fire that is being 'broadcast' over a larger area

The OBSCR does not apply to RMOF





# Local Government Jurisdiction

City of Courtenay

# City of Courtenay Fire Department

- The City of Courtenay Bylaw Enforcement Policy 4000.00.01 provides consistent enforcement and management of complaints relating to City of Courtenay Bylaws. The City does not have a bylaw in place to enforce air quality complaints.
- The Courtenay Fire Department responds to fire calls to investigate hazards from a fire safety perspective and does not enforce calls regarding air quality and smoke. Callers are directed to contact the environmental compliance agency - Report All Poachers and Pollutants (RAPP) at 1-877-952-7277 to report environmental concerns.
- The Courtenay Fire Department is responsible for enforcing open fire bylaws to the City of Courtenay and three fire protection districts outside of the City.

# Outdoor Burning

## 1. City of Courtenay - Bylaw No 2556

- **All fires are banned within the City of Courtenay year round (since 2008)** unless:
  - under special circumstances granted in writing by the Fire Chief;
  - the owner of the property where the Open Fire is intended to occur first obtains a Burning Permit, which requires the approval of the Fire Chief.
- **Burning of land clearing slash within the City is prohibited.**
- Open Fires are prohibited in any area of the City zoned as Commercial, Industrial, or Comprehensive Development.

### EXEMPTIONS TO OPEN AIR BURNING REGULATIONS WITHIN THE CITY OF COURTENAY

- The Fire Department may burn buildings, structures, or other materials for the purpose of training its personnel or members of the public in structural firefighting methods, fire investigation procedures or for the purpose of elimination of hazards.
- Gas fired (propane or natural gas) appliances or charcoal briquettes heating or cooking appliances are allowed all year round without a Burning Permit, so long as manufacturer's specifications are adhered to.
- Outdoor burning by lighting, igniting, starting or maintaining any outdoor fire of any kind within the City, during daylight hours, in order to burn orchard, berry, and vineyard pruning generated on site on properties zoned A1 Agricultural is permitted, provided that a Burning Permit is obtained. No permit under this section shall be issued for a period of time exceeding fifteen (15) days.

## 2. Courtenay Fire Protection (Improvement) District (CFPD) - CVRD Area B & C Bylaw 54

- **Open burning is permitted by bylaw year round with permits being required April 1 to October 31, unless a fire ban is in place.**
  - Domestic Waste burning is permitted as long as it is burned in a metal or masonry container fitted with a metal screen or grill of less than 9.5 mm (3/8") mesh to restrict sparks or flying debris during the hours of sunrise to sunset unless a notice that permits will be required for all or any fires during the period specified is in the notice;
  - **Trees permits are not required** unless a notice is published that permits will not be required during the period specified in the notice (burning of debris which resulted from the felling or destruction of trees).

## 3. Tsolum Farnham Fire Protection District - Service agreement between CVRD and City of Courtenay – CVRD Area C

- **Open burning is permitted by bylaw year round with permits being required April 1 to October 31 unless a fire ban is in place.**
  - Domestic Waste burning is permitted between sunrise and sunset provided it is burnt in a domestic incinerator fitted with a metal screen or grill with a mesh of less than 9.5 mm (3/8") to restrict sparks or flying debris. (No person shall burn any garbage, animal waste, rubber, tires, oil, tar, asphalt shingles, battery boxes, plastic material, or any other materials which produce heavy black smoke or create a noxious odour.)
  - **Trees permits are required at all times** for the burning of debris that results from the cutting and felling of trees and from land clearing activities.

## 4. Merville Fire Protection District - Service agreement between Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and City of Courtenay – CVRD Area C

- **Open burning is permitted by bylaw year round with permits being required April 1 to October 31 unless a fire ban is in place.**