
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

Caution in areas burned by wildfires

KELOWNA – The 2018 wildfire season has been one of the most challenging in British Columbia’s history, and some areas of the province have sustained considerable damage.

Hunters, recreationalists and anyone else heading into the backcountry should use caution when travelling in areas affected by wildfires, since there may be safety hazards present. These hazards could include:

- danger trees (fire-damaged trees that have become unstable and could fall over without warning)
- ash pits, which may be hard to detect and can remain hot long after the flames have died down
- unstable soils and terrain
- increased potential for landslides or rock falls
- damaged trails or irregular trail surfaces
- increased water runoff, which could lead to flooding or debris flows
- damaged fencing, which could allow livestock to enter roadways

In areas that have been severely burned, post-wildfire risks may last for two years or more. However, the increased risk of floods or debris flows in severely burned areas may persist much longer.

Every year, post-wildfire hazard assessments are completed on significant wildfires to identify potential threats to public safety, buildings or infrastructure. Risk mitigation and rehabilitation planning are already underway in some areas.

The BC Wildfire Service reminds members of the public that they also need to use extreme caution in regions where fires are still burning. Wildfires are active worksites where fire suppression efforts may be ongoing.

People can expect to see smouldering ground fires and smoke within the perimeters of existing wildfires over the coming weeks. This is common with large wildfires and may continue for some time. If smoke is rising from well within a fire’s perimeter and the area is surrounded by black, burned material, this is typically not a concern. However, smoke rising from green, unburned fuel or from outside a fire’s perimeter should be reported immediately.

To report a wildfire, unattended campfire or open burning violation, call *5555 on a cellphone or 1 800 663-5555 toll-free. For the latest information on current wildfire activity, burning restrictions, road closures and air quality advisories, visit: www.bcwildfire.ca

You can also follow the latest wildfire news:

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

Quick Facts:

- Area restriction orders are still in effect for Crown land in the vicinity of some active wildfires, to help protect public safety and avoid interference with firefighting activities.
- A list of areas affected by area restriction orders is available online at: www.gov.bc.ca/wildfirebans
- Even if an area restriction order has been rescinded, officials engaged in fire control (including firefighters) have the authority under the Wildfire Act and its regulations to order anyone to leave the area.

Learn More:

A “Landslide and Flooding Risks Due to Wildfires” brochure describes how wildfire activity may increase the risk of landslides and flooding, lists warning signs that people should watch for and advises what they should do in an emergency. The brochure is available online:

<http://ow.ly/WKGJ30INvX4>

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