

## Burning Using Air Curtain Incinerators

August 2021

This Open Burning Smoke Control regulation (OBSCR) factsheet is for burning using an **Air Curtain Incinerator**.

For more information on the different types of burning covered by the OBSCR, visit the [Open Burning Smoke Control website](#). Please also review the [Information for all burners](#) factsheet for information on Smoke Sensitivity Zones, prohibited materials and the ventilation index.

An **air curtain incinerator** is designed to aid in combustion and reduce emissions by directing a flow of air (air curtain) across a contained fire of vegetative debris. OBSCR sets conditions for the use of air curtain incinerators.

### Step 1 Plan before you burn

- Burn as little vegetative debris as possible. This is a requirement of the regulation and alternative disposal methods such as chipping, mulching or taking to a green waste recycling facility must be investigated before burning.
- **Follow local burning bylaws, fire bans and restrictions.** Check with your local Fire Department and the [BC Wildfire Service](#) for more information.
- You must keep a written record with information about the burn.

### Step 2 Determine a location to operate the air curtain incinerator

- Burning conditions are determined based on your distance from neighbours.
  - An air curtain burner **cannot** be operated less than 100 m from residences and businesses, and 500 m from a school, hospital or community care facility.
  - If the air curtain incinerator is located more than 1000 m (1 km) from residences and businesses, and 2000 m (2 km) from a school, hospital or community care facility, there are fewer requirements. Follow **Large Setback** instructions below.
  - If the air curtain incinerator is located between 100 m and 1 km from residences and businesses, and between 500 m and 2 km from a school, hospital or community care facility, there are more requirements to minimize the impact of smoke on nearby residents. Follow **Small Setback** conditions below.

### Step 3 Prepare to operate the air curtain incinerator

- Vegetative debris does not need to be seasoned before burning.
- Vegetative debris must not be stacked above the air outlet of the air curtain incinerator.
- The air curtain incinerator must be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and a copy (e.g., the manufacturer's operating manual) is kept on site for the duration of the burn.

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### Step 4 On the day of your burn

- The air curtain incinerator's blowers must operate continuously until the vegetative debris has been reduced to ash or the combustion has ceased.
- Opacity of smoke generated must be lower than 40% during the 30 minute start up period, and no more than 15% for more than five minutes during any other 30 minute period of the air curtain incinerator's operation.

#### How to Assess Opacity

**Opacity** is the degree to which smoke obscures the view of an object.

0% - no visible smoke

15% - transparent, barely visible smoke

40% - smoke that you can still see through

100% - smoke that completely obscures visibility (you can't see through it)

**Large Setback.** If the air curtain incinerator is located more than 1000 m (1 km) from residences and businesses, and 2000 m (2 km) from a school, hospital or community care facility, it may be operated at all hours.

- You do not need to check the ventilation index before burning.

**Small Setback.** If the air curtain incinerator is located between 100 m and 1 km from residences and businesses, and between 500 m and 2 km from a school, hospital or community care facility, you must:

- **Check the ventilation index.** Please find your location on our [interactive ventilation index and Smoke Sensitivity Zone map](#).
  - The map provides information about the ventilation index for the burn day. For additional information on the ventilation index go to the [Information for all burners factsheet](#).
- You may burn as many days in a row as necessary.
  - The ventilation index for your location must be **"GOOD"** or **"FAIR"** on the day of your burn and **"GOOD"** or **"FAIR"** for each following day(s) that burning is carried on.
    - On each day you burn, **start time** is at least one hour after sunrise.
    - On each day your burn, **end time** is sunset.

#### Ventilation Index

To find the current forecast for your location check on the [B.C. Ventilation Index Forecast](#) website, use the interactive map hyperlinks provided on the website, or call the toll free number.



**Ventilation Index:**  
1-888-281-2992



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#### More Information

For additional information see the Ministry's [Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation](#) webpage or send your inquiry to: [OBSCR@gov.bc.ca](mailto:OBSCR@gov.bc.ca)

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- Vegetative debris can only be added to the ignited air curtain incinerator between allowed hours, one hour after sunrise to sunset.
- If the ventilation forecast is “**POOR**” for the day that it is obtained, no more vegetative debris may be ignited.

### Step 5 **Watch your smoke**

Be aware of the smoke produced and where it is going.

- If the smoke from your burn could negatively impact people or cause a navigation hazard by reducing visibility at nearby highways or airports, do not start your burn.
- If your burn is in progress and is negatively impacting people or causing a navigation hazard by reducing visibility at nearby airports or highways, no more vegetative debris can be ignited or added to the burn until the conditions have improved.

During periods of poor air quality, the Director may prohibit all burning. Please check [air quality advisories](#) before burning.

Persons preparing for or conducting an open burn should review and comply with the legal provisions set out in the [Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation](#). This Factsheet provides summary information only.



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