Burning Diseased Vegetative Debris **August 2021**

This Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation (OBSCR) factsheet is for burning of **Diseased Vegetative Debris**.

For more information on the different types of burning covered by the OBCSR, 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.

Step 1 Plan before you burn

- The debris must be verified as infested by an insect or pathogen listed in OBSCR Schedule 1 (see tables on next page) by a registered agrologist, professional biologist, or professional forester or registered forest technician.
  - The verification must be submitted to the Ministry at least 24 hours before the planned burn.
- At least half (50%) of the vegetative debris being burned must be diseased.
- All occupants within 150 m of the planned burn must be notified no later than 24 hours beforehand. All reasonable effort must be made to inform occupants and managers of all residences, businesses, schools, hospitals and community care facilities.

Step 2 Determine a location on your property to build piles

- You can only burn vegetative debris collected within 5 km of your burn site.
- Setback distances are reduced for burning diseased vegetative debris to:

At least 50 m from all residences or businesses.

At least 100 m from schools, hospitals and community care facilities.

Step 3 Build your piles to minimize smoke

- Diseased vegetative debris does not need to be seasoned. You can burn freshly cut debris.
- Make sure that there no prohibited materials in your burn pile. **You can not burn prohibited materials.** See the Information for all burners factsheet for a full list of prohibited materials.
- Build piles to allow air flow and good combustion. Make the piles taller than they are wide with different sized pieces included. Smaller pieces burn faster, avoid burning stumps if possible.
- Minimize the amount of soil. Soil slows down the fire. Get your fire burning hot and with good airflow. Hot fires produce less smoke.

Step 4 On the day of your burn

- **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.
    - The ventilation index for your location must be "**GOOD**" or **"FAIR"** on the day of your burn.
- Burn length must be less than one day.
    - **Start time** is at least one hour after sunrise.
    - **End time** is 4 p.m. or two hours before sunset, whichever is later. This means that on days where the sun sets earlier than 6 p.m., you may burn up to 4 p.m. and on days that the sun sets after 6 p.m. you can burn up to 2 hours before the sun sets. For example, if the sun sets at 6:30 p.m. you can burn until 4:30 p.m. If the sun sets at 4:45 p.m. you can burn up to 4 p.m.

- A fire accelerant (such as a liquid fuel) should be used to ignite diseased vegetation that is not seasoned.

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

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.

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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

Plant pathogens and infesting insects

Vegetative debris can be verified as diseased by a registered professional (such as an agrologist or professional biologist) if it is infested with one or more of the pests listed in the following tables.

The Ministry may also allow burning of vegetation infested by a pathogen or insect not listed in these tables. This requires written confirmation from the Ministry that burning is necessary to stop the spread of an infestation.

Plant Pathogens	
Anthracnose and perennial cankers	Leucostoma (cytospora) canker
Botryosphaeria canker	Oak wilt
Dutch elm disease	Pear trellis rust
Eastern filbert blight	Phomopsis canker
European canker	Plum pox virus or Sharka
European larch canker	Ramorum blight and canker or sudden oak death
Fire blight	Thousand canker disease
Godronia canker	

Infesting Insects	
Ambrosia beetle	Emerald ash borer
Apple clearwing moth	European spruce long-horned beetle
Asian long-horned beetle	Japanese cedar long-horned beetle
Banded elm bark beetle	Mountain pine beetle or larvae
Black pine bark beetle	Native and European elm bark beetle
Brown spruce long-horned beetle	Peach tree borer
Citrus long-horned beetle	Shot hole borer
Common pine shoot beetle	Spruce beetle or larvae
Dogwood borer	Walnut twig beetle
Douglas-fir beetle or larvae	

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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More Information

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