

Category 3 Fire



- A Category 3 fire is an open fire that burns:
- material concurrently in 3 or more piles each not exceeding 2 metres in height and 3 metres in width
- material in one or more piles each exceeding 2 metres in height or 3 metres in width
- one or more windrows (row of cut hay or small grain crop stubble or grass over an area exceeding 0.2 hectares)

Open Burn Smoke Control Regulations (OBSCR)

The following vegetation size exemptions for agricultural or domestic purposes apply.

- If all of the vegetative debris open burned is branches or other pieces of vegetative debris, with or without leaves, of which at least some of the individual branches or pieces are 10 cm or greater, the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation applies.

Note: A fire chief, or fire chief's designate, does not have the discretion to exempt the requirements to follow the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation except under specified circumstances (e.g. FireSmart activities).

Permit Requirements

- A permit for a Category 3 fire is required year-round. A fire chief, or fire chief's designate, does not have the discretion to rescind permit requirements for Category 3 fires within their defined fire service area.
- It is not recommended to charge a fee for a Category 3 permit.

Setbacks

- The Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation prescribes setbacks for Category 3 Fires.
- In the unlikely event where there is an exemption to the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation. The minimum setbacks are 15 metres from any building, structure, fence, tree or hedge.

Fire Operators

- Obtain a permit from the fire department.
- Obtain a Burn Registration Number from the BC Wildfire Service 1-888-797-1717.
- Ensure that every reasonable alternative for reducing, reusing or recycling the vegetative debris is used to minimize the amount of the vegetative debris to be open burned.
- Follow the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation, including the [Venting Index for Southern Vancouver Island](#) and the [Information Fact Sheet for All Open Burners](#).
- Avoid conducting an open fire when it's windy.
- Do not burn green debris or leaves.

- Do not use an open fire for the disposal of domestic waste or prohibited materials.
 - Never leave an open fire unattended.
 - Never ignite a Category 3 fire if a prohibition has been established.
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Enforcement

- A fire chief, or fire chief's designate, is responsible for issuing and rescinding permits for Category 3 fires.
- It is recommended education be the main focus of enforcement with warnings or Municipal Ticket Information the last resort.
- The BC Conservation Officer Service enforces the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation.