

# Backyard Burning



Photo Credit: Peter Doyle

## Some Burning Facts

- ☑ Burning releases hydrocarbons, pollutants, dust and ash, which are health hazards.
- ☑ Burning household garbage and plastics releases very harmful dioxins, some of which are linked to cancer.
- ☑ Burning will not rid fields of weeds; the seeds have already established themselves in the soil.
- ☑ Burning will not get rid of knapweed. In fact, knapweed thrives in poor soil, especially in previously burned areas.
- ☑ Burning grass in the spring results in the loss of important soil nutrients, especially when done year after year.
- ☑ Burning grass around your home is an unnecessary precaution in the forest fire season, as grass fires rarely damage homes.

## Decided NOT to Burn?

**Great! Here's where you can get information on alternatives to burning, toxic substance disposal, composting and much more!**

**Recycling Council of British Columbia Hotline**

Toll Free: 1-800-667-4321

website: [www.rcbc.bc.ca/](http://www.rcbc.bc.ca/)

**Regional District of Central Kootenay**

Phone: (250) 352-6665  
Toll Free: 1-800-268-7325

website: [www.rdck.bc.ca](http://www.rdck.bc.ca)  
e-mail: [wastedept@rdcd.bc](mailto:wastedept@rdcd.bc)

**Regional District of East Kootenay**

Phone: (250) 489-2791  
Toll Free: 1-888-478-7335

e-mail: [rdek@rdek.bc.ca](mailto:rdek@rdek.bc.ca)

**Regional District of Kootenay Boundary  
Resource Recovery Coordinator**

Toll Free: 1-800-355-7352  
Phone: (250) 368-0232

website: [www.rdkb.com](http://www.rdkb.com)

**Regional District of Columbia Shuswap**

Phone: (250) 832-8194  
Toll Free: 1-888-248-2773

e-mail: [dmooney@csrd.bc.ca](mailto:dmooney@csrd.bc.ca)

## What You Need to Know Before You Burn - A Guide for Backyard Burning



Ministry of  
Environment

**Ministry of Environment; Kootenay Region**

(250) 354-6355 or <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/kor/>

**Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation**

<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/kor/epd/eqs.htm>

# Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation

The Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation sets out conditions that must be met in order to conduct a legal open burn. The following points below are the most common conditions that must be met prior to conducting an open burn.

- Check with your municipality or regional district, and the Ministry of Forests, for local burning bylaws, restrictions and permits.
- To obtain a burn reference number call the Ministry of Forests, at 1-888-797-1717.
- You must make sure the weather is good for smoke dispersion. Check the Ventilation Index for your area:
  - By phone: 1-877-922-3399
  - On the web: [www.weatheroffice.com](http://www.weatheroffice.com)
- Your fire must be at least 100 metres away from any adjacent homes or businesses.
- Your fire must be at least 500 metres away from any schools in session, hospitals or extended-care facilities.



Photo Credit: Ministry of Environment

***Open burning can affect air quality on a small scale – your neighbourhood, your community – and on a much larger scale, polluting entire valleys and beyond.***

## Other Considerations

- Is the smoke from my fire going to harm my neighbours?
- Exposure to the particulate matters and gases in smoke quickly becomes a health hazard – especially for the elderly, children, and people with heart and lung problems.
- During the winter months it is advisable to find other methods of disposing of land-clearing debris as the Ventilation Index is rarely “Good” or “Fair.”

### Some prohibited materials include (but are not limited to):

- asphalt and asphalt products
- construction waste
- fuel and lubricant containers
- household garbage
- paint & paint products
- plastic
- rail ties
- rubber
- styrofoam
- tar paper
- tires
- treated lumber

The burning of prohibited materials causes pollution and as such is a violation of the *Environmental Management Act*, Section 6(4).



**Avoid disposable items; buy products in bulk; look for products with less packaging.**



**Repair, sell, or donate used or unwanted items. One person's trash is another person's treasure!**



**Contact your town, city or regional district office to find out about composting, recyclable materials or drop-off locations.**