



Coastal Fire Centre

BC Wildfire Service

Forests, Lands, Natural Resource
Operations and Rural Development

Staying Informed, 2018



OUR AREA

The Coastal Fire Centre covers about 16.5 million hectares of land, and contains over 85% of the population of B.C. It has relationships with over 164 Fire Departments and 28 Regional Districts, as well as First Nations communities, forest industry, and private land holders. Much of the terrain is very steep and rugged, with accessibility issues such as limited road access, requiring transportation by air/water.

Interest in Coastal fires is as varied as the people within it. Most fires escape any notice, while relatively small ones near communities can cause interest that has less to do with the danger from the fire than from viewer's concerns, curiosity or perceptions.

The Coastal Fire Centre responds to an average of 280 wildfires each year, and wildfire response is coordinated at the Coastal Fire Centre located in Parksville, BC. Fire response takes place in the zones and bases throughout the fire centre area.

How do concerned people find out about wildfires? How do they get their questions answered?

If the wildfire takes place on land that is within fire department jurisdiction, public communication about these fires is the responsibility of the regional district or municipality who are responding to the fire. However, just as the BC Wildfire Service may assist, if asked, with fire response, they may also assist local government with public communication if requested to do so.

If the wildfire is on land within the Coastal Fire Centre's jurisdiction, the local zone and bases will respond to the fire, and the fire centre will coordinate resources and personnel as needed. Public communication about these fires falls to the fire centre as well, as the zones and bases will be busy responding to the fire itself. Fire centre communication staff assist this process to ensure a flow of information can reach interested parties.

Methods to find information are outlined on the reverse of this document.



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FIRES AFFECTING COMMUNITIES

Where a fire is, is not as important as **where it might go**.

It takes professional evaluation to determine the risk a wildfire poses to a community or home. Depending on terrain, current and forecasted weather and fire behaviour, some fires pose little risk, while others may pose more.

If a fire occurs and it is determined it could affect a community, operational communication will occur between local government and the fire centre as soon as possible. This communication is to assist local government prepare their emergency response plans and also to coordinate response between the agencies.

FIRES OF CONCERN TO COMMUNITIES

The BC Wildfire Service maintains several communication portals for public information about fires in their jurisdictional area. Each one provides different types of information, and offer a variety of communication methods, to help keep communities informed.



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Wildfire Service

BCWILDFIRE.CA

The BC Wildfire Service maintains a website that contains a wealth of information about wildfire.

The **Wildfire of Note** page contains information about wildfires that have impacted communities or caused heightened public concern. These pages are updated by Fire Information Officers as new relevant information is obtained and confirmed. Find it by choosing "Wildfires of Note" from the main page.

The **Current Wildfire Activity** page contains information of all active wildfires, or all fires from that fire season. This information is automatically updated every 2 hours. If you have Google Earth installed on your computer, a file can be downloaded from this page location. Find it by choosing "Interactive Maps".



BCFORESTFIREINFO

The BC Wildfire Service maintains a Facebook page that contains content about wildfires and reacts to public questions.

@BCGOVFIREINFO

The BC Wildfire Service also maintains a twitter feed for breaking information.

BY PHONE

If you'd like to speak to one of our Coastal Fire Centre communications staff, please contact one of the numbers below. These phone lines are available Monday to Friday, 0800-1600 daily. Extended hours of operation may occur should fire behaviour or other activity warrant a more immediate response.

Coastal Fire Centre
Donna MacPherson, Communications Specialist
Coastal Agency and Media line

250 951-4222
250 951-4229
250 951-4209