

**March 25, 2020**

### **OPEN FIRE BAN IN EFFECT**

- A ban on open fires is in effect to protect Nova Scotia's forests during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The ban prohibits open fires for any purpose in woods or within 305 metres (1,000 feet) of woods in any part of the province. The ban does not apply to private campgrounds.
- The fire ban will remain in effect until May 15, 2020.
- Lands and Forestry's wildfire fighters are ready to respond to fire emergencies.
- The public can report wildfires by calling 1-800-565-2224.

#### **What is the fire ban?**

The ban prohibits open fires for any purpose in woods or within 305 metres (1,000 feet) of woods in any part of the province. Bans on open fires are enacted as needed to protect the health of the province's forests during periods of high risk.

#### **Why are open fires banned?**

The ban is a temporary measure to reduce the risk of wildfires and potential damage to homes and properties during the pandemic.

#### **When does the ban come into effect?**

The ban is in effect from March 23 to May 15, 2020.

#### **Will the ban end before May 15?**

The ban will be re-evaluated in April and may be lifted, continued or extended, depending on conditions at the time.

#### **What about burning in chimineas, fire pits, and other backyard burning appliances?**

If the fire is not in an enclosed CSA approved appliance, the fire is considered to be an open fire and is not permitted.

#### **Does the ban apply to private campgrounds?**

The ban does not apply to private campgrounds.

**Do I still need to check burn restrictions each day?**

No. The ban on open fires is in force all the time. We've also updated the provincial BurnSafe map to show burning is no longer permitted.

**Is the province prepared to deal with wildfires? What is the risk?**

Nova Scotians are safe. The province continues to operate all essential services, including wildfire response, during the pandemic. Our fire crews are highly skilled and ready to respond to emergencies.

The risk of wildfires is highest during the spring, and the ban on open fires is a precautionary measure that will reduce the number of calls they must respond to and help us maintain our firefighting resources.

**How will the ban be applied?**

Every Nova Scotian is asked to follow the burn ban and not create unnecessary risk in these challenging times.

**What should I do if I see someone burning during the ban period?**

Call 911 if it is an emergency or the fire is out of control. Call 1-800-565-2224 to report an unsafe burning practice.

**Who do I contact for more information on the ban?**

Call your nearest Lands and Forestry office for assistance or more information on the burn ban or safe burning practices.