



News Release

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March 26, 2020

Open Burning not permitted in Central Okanagan

Effective today (March 26) and until April 15, open burning is no longer permitted in the Central Okanagan. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy in collaboration with provincial public health partners has issued an open burning restriction for all High Sensitivity Zones across the province, which includes the Central Okanagan.

The restriction applies to all areas within the City of West Kelowna, City of Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, District of Peachland, District of Lake Country and Regional District of Central Okanagan. During this time, no new fires may be started. A map of all affected areas is available on the [provincial Interactive Venting Index webpage](#).

The decision comes as cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in British Columbia continue to increase. The BC Centre for Disease Control recommends implementing measures that help to reduce excess air pollution in populated areas. Evidence has shown that exposure to air pollution can increase susceptibility to respiratory viral infections by decreasing immune function.

While the focus remains on physical distancing to prevent the spread of infection, keeping our air as clean as possible will further support Central Okanagan residents during this difficult time. The restrictions will be evaluated daily, and changes will be made accordingly.

In the interest of the health of all residents, those Central Okanagan property owners that qualify for open burning are thanked for their support by adhering to the new restrictions and not igniting any burn piles.

For more information about alternatives to open burning in the Central Okanagan, visit rdco.com/airquality.

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