



# Coastal Fire Centre

BC Wildfire Service

Forests, Lands, Natural Resource  
Operations and Rural Development

## Staying Informed 2019



### OUR AREA

The Coastal Fire Centre covers about 16.5 million hectares of land, and contains over 70% of the population of B.C. It has relationships with over 130 Fire Departments, 15 Regional Districts, 77 local governments and many 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 wildfires is as varied as the people within it. Most wildfires escape any notice, while relatively small ones near communities can cause interest that has less to do with the danger from the wildfire than from viewer's concerns, curiosity or perceptions.

The Coastal Fire Centre responds to an average of 287 wildfires each year, and wildfire response is coordinated at the Coastal Fire Centre located in Parksville, BC. Fire response is undertaken by 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 wildfires is the responsibility of the regional district or municipality that is responding to the wildfire. However, just as the BC Wildfire Service may assist, if asked, with wildfire response, they may also assist local government with public communication if requested.

If the wildfire is on land within the Coastal Fire Centre's jurisdiction, the local zone and bases will respond to the wildfire, and the fire centre will coordinate resources and personnel as needed. Public communication about these wildfires falls to the fire centre, as the zones and bases will be busy responding to the wildfire itself. Fire centre communication staff work to ensure that information reaches interested parties.

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



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## WILDFIRES AFFECTING COMMUNITIES

**Where** a wildfire starts and **where it might go** are important factors.

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 wildfire 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 to coordinate response between the agencies.

## WILDFIRES OF CONCERN TO COMMUNITIES

The BC Wildfire Service maintains several communication portals for public information about wildfires in their jurisdictional area. Each (described below) provides different types of information and offers a variety of methods to help keep communities informed.



Home / Public Safety & Emergency Services /

### 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 may impact communities or cause 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 **All Current Wildfires** page contains information on all active wildfires, or all wildfires 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 "Current Wildfire Situation".



### 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 wildfire behaviour or other activity warrant a more immediate response.

Coastal Fire Centre  
Donna MacPherson, Communications Specialist  
Communications Assistant (seasonal)  
Coastal Agency and Media line

250 951-4222  
250 951-4229  
250 951-4238  
250 951-4209