

February 25, 2021

Bulletin 2021-001-FI

## Open Air Fires

The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify the regulations pertaining to open air and outdoor area fires. These regulations are intended to meet the objectives of the BC Fire Code and Vancouver Fire By-law for safety of persons, fire protection of buildings and facilities, and health of the public. This bulletin supersedes 2014-001-FI.

Whether on private property or public property, the regulations may vary. However, in all cases, **the burning of paper, wood, plastics, or other combustibles where a substantial amount of smoke, noxious fumes, or flaming embers could be created is considered unacceptable and is prohibited.** The burning of these materials does not meet the fire protection and health objectives of the Fire Code and the Fire By-law.



Persons found to be starting or maintaining an open air fire will be required to produce an approved permit, extinguish the fire, or face a potential fine or prosecution.

### On Public Property

On a street or other public property, such as a Vancouver beach or park, city street or boulevard, Wreck Beach or other Metro Vancouver beach or park, University of British Columbia, and the University Endowment Lands, **open air fires are prohibited**, unless all of the following conditions are met:

1. written authorization or permit is received from the public agency
2. a fire permit is obtained from the Fire Chief, and
3. the fire is fuelled by only butane, propane, natural gas, gel fuel, charcoal or other commercially available clean-burning briquettes.

No fires are allowed at any time at a Vancouver beach or park under Park Board regulations. No barbecues are allowed on the sandy beach areas. A barbecue must be 75 cm from the ground and full clean up afterwards is required; coals must be doused with cold water and removed, and if there is an extreme fire warning charcoal cannot be used (propane only).

Where the public agency has granted a written exemption for an open air fire, a permit from the Fire Chief will be required. Plans must be submitted to show sufficient clear space to combustibles, design of the receptacle or appliance to be used, fire protection equipment to be provided on site, and other information as required by the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief may refuse to issue a permit that in the opinion of the Fire Chief would involve an activity endangering life or property.

### On Private Property (permit required)

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On private property, an open air fire that is fuelled only by butane, propane, natural gas, gel fuel, charcoal, or other commercially available clean-burning briquettes may be allowed if all of the following conditions are met:

1. a gas permit is obtained from the City for any fixed natural gas installation,
2. a gas permit is obtained from the BC Safety Authority for any fixed propane gas installation, and
3. a fire permit is obtained from the Fire Chief, and

In the application for a fire permit, plans are to be submitted to show sufficient clear space to combustibles, design of the receptacle or appliance to be used, fire protection equipment to be provided on site, and other information as required by the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief may refuse to issue a permit that in the opinion of the Fire Chief would involve an activity endangering life or property.

Examples of acceptable open air fires with a fire permit:

- “Tiki” torch
- Portable or fixed gas burning patio heater that produces an open flame
- Fixed fire bowl or fireplace that burn propane or natural gas

### **On Private Property (permit not required)**

On private property, an open air fire that is fuelled by only butane, propane, natural gas, gel fuel, charcoal or other commercially available clean-burning briquettes is allowed without a permit if all of the following conditions are met:

1. the fire is used for cooking food,
2. the fire is contained in an approved (CSA, for example) outdoor cooking appliance, or outdoor fireplace, and
3. clearance to combustibles is maintained in accordance with the appliance manufacturer’s specification, or in the absence of such specification **3 m**.

Examples of acceptable open air fires without a fire permit on private property:

- Portable fire bowl or fireplace that burns propane to produce a fire used for cooking food
- Portable propane camping stove
- Portable hibachi barbecue burning charcoal

### **Prohibited Fires**

Examples of open air fires on public or private property that is prohibited:

- Chimineas or fire pit burning wood
- Burn barrel burning paper or wood
- Sky lantern

Signed,

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