

Wednesday, July 6, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WELLAND FIRE CHIEF ISSUES IMMEDIATE BAN ON OPEN-AIR FIRES

Welland, ON – Today, Welland's Fire Chief, Denys Prevost, has issued a **BAN ON OPEN-AIR FIRES** that applies everywhere in the City. This ban includes all backyard recreational fires, other open flame devices, and suspends all burning permits. This BAN will remain in place until further notice by the Fire Chief, pending a reduction in the Forest Fire Danger Rating and/or local fuels become substantially greener.

BBQs using natural gas, propane, or BBQ charcoal ONLY are exempted from this ban and only if they are being directly used for cooking purposes. No other use is permitted and all fires must be lit immediately before and extinguished immediately after cooking is completed. No wood fuels are permitted. Residents are asked to be extra vigilant.

Construction activity that requires the use of open flame devices (example roofing operations) are not yet subject to this ban, HOWEVER, operators must exercise extreme caution to avoid starting fires, as conditions are dry and fires can start more easily than normal or expected.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) has **today** raised the **Forest Fire Danger Rating** in Niagara from Moderate to **High**. For more forest fire information from the MNRF see http://www.giscoeapp.lrc.gov.on.ca/ForestFireInformationMap/Index.html?site=AFFES_ONLine&viewer=AFFES_ONLINE&locale=en-US including what other precautions are advisable with a High rating.

For more information on open-air fire regulations in Welland please reference the Open-Air Fires By-Law (<http://www.welland.ca/ByLaws/bylaw2011-85.pdf>).

Residents are also reminded that it is not legal to purchase or to set-off consumer fireworks in the City after Canada Day.

Substantial **finest** and **costs** may be levied against persons who violate the Open-Air Fires or the Fireworks bylaws, or who violate the **Fire Ban**. Fines of \$450 (+\$95 victim surcharge) are likely for violators. Provincial Offence prosecution is also possible with fines up to \$5,000. Cost recovery for extinguishment of fires is permitted under the bylaw.

If you require more specific information regarding the **FIRE BAN** please contact Fire & Emergency Services Department at 905-735-9922, or e-mail fire@welland.ca

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