



OBSCR Information to Woodlots - November 12, 2019

The new Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation (OBSCR) came into effect on September 15, 2019. Therefore, the regulations governing our work to abate fuel accumulations from harvesting operations changed at the start of this burning season, with little opportunity to provide extension training to Woodlot licensees. The Federation is reaching out to government to provide this crucial education component. In the meantime, licensees are encouraged to discuss their burn plans with the ministry and ensure their operations are compliant with the new OBSCR.

Two key pieces of information you will need to know

- Venting index
- The Smoke Sensitivity Zone the planned burning is in.

Know The Venting Index

A web map of venting conditions throughout BC, translated into allowable burning activity, can be found by going to:

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdpa/venting/>

Select the link at the top of the web page that opens that says " View an interactive map of venting index zones and the current venting index."

BRITISH COLUMBIA BC Air Quality

Air Quality Health Index | Current Air Quality Data | BC Air Data Archive

Home / Environmental Protection & Sustainability / Air, Land, & Water / Air / Air Quality Data /

Can I Burn Outdoors Today? Check the Ventilation Index

The daily Smoke Control Forecast contains predictions of the Ventilation Index, a measure of atmospheric turbulence and low level winds, for 25 B.C. locations.

[View an interactive map of venting index zones and the current venting index.](#)

[View map of smoke sensitivity zone maps.](#)

The burning of woody debris outdoors is only permitted when the forecast Ventilation Index is sufficient to disperse smoke. Before debris can be ignited, the Ventilation Index must be predicted to be both **GOOD (55-100)** this afternoon as well as **FAIR or GOOD (34-100)** tomorrow afternoon. Additional rules on outdoor burning are in the [Ministry of Environment Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation](#).

You can also Google "venting index map" and pick the link with "arcgis" in the URL.

The map can take a while to load. The map does not show woodlot licences, but with some pan and zoom you can navigate to where your WL is located. If a burning status divide runs right through your WL, you will need to be careful in determining which area your planned activity lies within. Given the magnitude of the penalties associated with this regulation, it might be wise to err on the side of caution.

The map divides the province into three classes:

YES (> 1 Day)

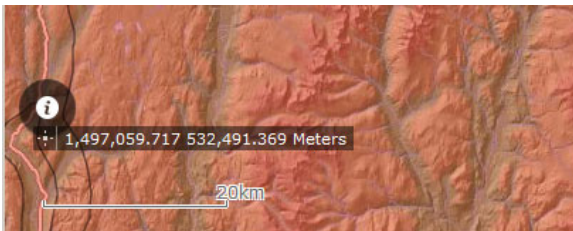
YES (1 Day)

NO

The two "YES" classes are varied shades of blue on the map at this time, which is quite confusing until you see an area with both shades of blue.

Know the Smoke Sensitivity Zone

The new OBSCR Division 1 provides the definitions of what the three class names above mean. Reviewing OBSCR Division 1 will quickly show that sometimes you also need to know what Smoke Sensitivity Zone your planned burn lies within. The web map will provide this info. There is a small icon with a lower case italic *i* in the bottom left corner of the map.



Click the icon, click your planned burning location, and open the pop-up report to get the detailed info you need.

The web map is a very useful tool, but it is a landscape scale tool. "The map said I could" is not a defense if your burning activity contravenes another section of OBSCR, such as Section 13 -Setbacks for Open Burning.

More information including training, interpretations, advice, etc. will be provided as it becomes available.