

**SECTION: Emergency Services****16-02****SUBJECT: Special Areas Fire****POLICY NAME: Fire Ban Levels****POLICY DEPT(S): Emergency Services/ Parks/ District Offices****EFFECTIVE DATE May 13, 2025****LAST AMENDED: June 2015****BOARD MOTION: 08-14-2025****1. PURPOSE:**

The Special Areas Board is committed to reducing the risk of wildfire events during dry or hazardous conditions to protect the people, property, and natural resources of the Special Areas. When fire danger is high, the Special Areas Board may issue a level of fire ban to limit or restrict burning activities.

**2. DEFINITIONS:**

In this policy:

"Board" shall mean the Special Areas Board;

"Charcoal briquettes" shall mean a fuel source for cooking, grilling and heating;

"Controlled Burn" shall mean the setting of an outdoor or structure fire within the Special Areas;

"Controlled Burn Notification" shall mean completion of the notification form by the person intending on a controlled burn through the Special Areas Board Website or by contacting the local District Office;

"Cook-stove" shall mean fires used for cooking, grilling and heating, commonly housed in camp kitchen structures;

"Department" shall mean all Rural and Municipal Fire Departments within the boundaries of the Special Areas;

"Exploding targets" shall mean any device that reacts and potentially explodes when struck;

"Fireworks" shall mean pyrotechnic devices designed to burn and explode, including consumer fireworks, display fireworks, and special effect pyrotechnics. This definition includes firecrackers.

"Incinerator Fire" shall mean a fire that is confined within a non-combustible structure, container or barrel with openings covered with a heavy gauge metal screen having a mesh size not larger than 6 millimeters and which is used for the purpose of burning refuse;

"Open-flame oil devices" shall mean any device that uses an oil-based fuel to produce a visible flame that is not enclosed or shielded;

"Outdoor Fire" shall include fires involving humus, soil, farm produce, bush, grass, feed, straw, coal or any fire that has escaped or spread from a building, structure, machine, vehicle or incinerator. An Incinerator Fire without the required metal screen shall be deemed to be an outdoor fire;

"Propane/ natural gas-powered devices" shall mean any appliances commonly used for cooking, grilling and heating fueled by propane or natural gas;

"Regional Fire Chief" shall mean a person named or appointed as Regional Fire Chief for the Special Areas.

"Regional Deputy Fire Chief" shall mean a person named or appointed as Regional Deputy Fire Chief for the Special Areas.

"Safe Campfire" shall mean wood campfires within a metal, or brick fire ring located on rock, gravel, sand, or another non-combustible surface that extends at least one metre around the fire. Safe campfires on private land include private land campgrounds and private land recreation areas;

"Special Areas" shall mean the Special Areas No. 2, 3, & 4;

"Structure Fire" shall mean a fire confined to and within any building, structure, machine or vehicle which will or is likely to cause the destruction of, or damage to, such building, structure, machine or vehicle.

"Supervised SAB Campgrounds" shall mean Special Areas campgrounds and parks commonly known as Blood Indian Park, Gooseberry Lake Provincial Park, and Prairie Oasis Park;

"Tiered Fire Ban System" shall mean temporary measures brought in according to conditions. As fire danger levels rise or fall these restrictions can be adjusted;

"Un-supervised SAB Campgrounds" shall mean Special Areas campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, or rest areas; commonly known as Bindloss, Blood Indian Overflow Camping Area, Buffalo, Carolside, Cereal, Dorothy, Esther, Hemaruka, Jenner, Little Fish Lake, Naco, New Brigden, and the Memorial Hwy 9 & 36 Rest Area.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Special Areas Board strives to provide information and process for the prevention or extinguishing of fires, for the health, safety and welfare of people and property.

#### **Assessment & Declaration**

The Board shall, upon recommendation of the Regional Fire Chief and/or Regional Deputy Fire Chief, assess the fire hazard using a *Tiered Fire Ban System* (See Appendix A) to declare the associated fire ban level.

The Regional Fire Chief and/or Regional Deputy Fire Chief will make their recommendation on the need to adjust the fire ban level based on input from the fire department and staff from each area to which the fire hazard will apply.

Fire ban levels may be imposed across the whole of the Special Areas, as reported on [www.albertafirebans.ca](http://www.albertafirebans.ca).

### Fire Activity Restrictions

Fire related activities will be restricted based upon the fire ban level declared by the Board. The table shown in Appendix A summarizes allowed activities under each fire ban level.

### FIRE BAN LEVELS

#### **NO RESTRICTION**



Controlled Burn Notifications are required for any type of burning, except campfires and incinerator fires.

Incinerator fires are permitted at a minimum distance of 30 m away from structures and 3 m away from combustible materials.

Safe campfires are allowed in all campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, or rest areas.

\*To deploy fireworks, users must complete a Controlled Burn Notification through the Special Areas Board website or by contacting the local District Office.

#### **FIRE ADVISORY**



The fire hazard rating has increased, and Controlled Burns may be restricted.

Incinerator fires are permitted at a minimum distance of 30 m away from structures and 3 m away from combustible materials.

Propane / natural gas-powered devices, including portable propane fire pits are allowed.

Safe campfires are allowed in all campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, or rest areas but may be restricted if conditions do not improve.

\*To deploy fireworks, users must complete a Controlled Burn Notification through the Special Areas Board website or by contacting the local District Office.

#### **FIRE RESTRICTION**



Existing Controlled Burns may be suspended or cancelled, and new Controlled Burns Notifications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Incinerator fires are permitted at a minimum distance of 30 m away from structures and 3 m away from combustible materials.

Propane / natural gas-powered devices, including portable propane fire pits are allowed.

Private Property & Supervised SAB Campgrounds: safe campfires and other fire activities are allowed as listed in Appendix A.

Un-supervised SAB Campgrounds: Fire activities will be restricted as listed in Appendix A.

\*To deploy fireworks, users must complete a Controlled Burn Notification through the Special Areas Board website or by contacting the local District Office.

## **TOTAL FIRE BAN**



All Controlled Burns are suspended or cancelled, and no new Controlled Burns will be allowed.

NO fires are allowed on public or private land; including but not limited to any fires in backyard fire pits, campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, or rest areas. This includes charcoal briquettes, cook-stove fires, fireworks, and open-flame oil devices.

Propane / natural gas-powered devices, including portable propane fire pits are allowed.

\*To deploy fireworks, users must:

- *Comply with the National Fire Code Alberta Edition 2019, Division B, Section 5.1.1.3, all users shall follow the handling and discharge of fireworks, NRCan 2010, "Display Fireworks Manual."*
- *Complete a Controlled Burn Notification through the Special Areas Board website or by contacting the local District Office, as per Policy 16-02.*
- *Fireworks are only permitted to be used in designated areas after approval has been obtained from the Regional Special Areas Fire Chief or designate. Approved fireworks locations include the beach area of Prairie Oasis Park and the beach area of Blood Indian Park.*

*This policy does not take precedence over the Alberta Fire Code 2023.*

### Controlled Burn Notifications

Controlled Burn Notifications with all required information shall be made through the Special Areas Board website or by contacting the local District Office.

The Regional Fire Chief and/or Regional Deputy Fire Chief may, in their absolute discretion, suspend or cancel a Controlled Burn at any time.

1. Upon receiving notice of the suspension or cancellation, the person concerned shall immediately extinguish any fire set pursuant to his or her Controlled Burn Notification.
2. If the Regional Fire Chief and/or Regional Deputy Fire Chief suspends or cancels any authorized Controlled Burns, Controlled Burn Notifications will not be allowed until the Regional Fire Chief and/or Regional Deputy Fire Chief deem conditions are safe to do so.

Exceptions for Controlled Burn Notifications apply to an outdoor fire that is:

1. a flare stack used in the petroleum industry;
2. lit for life safety purposes only;
3. any industrial or commercial type Incinerator that is required to be licensed under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, R.S.A. 2000 c. E-12;
4. prescribed by the regulations as per the *Forest & Prairie Protection Act* RSA 2000 cF-19 s18;2003 c20 s16; or
5. set for the purpose of training firefighters.

#### Cost Recovery

As per SAB Policy 16-01:

*"If the Department has taken action in response to a fire call, incident, or false alarm within the Special Areas, the Board may invoice associated costs to the owner or occupant of the affected land, provided the Board determines there are valid grounds for doing so."*

#### Prohibitions

As per SAB Policy 16-01:

No person shall:

1. damage or destroy the Department's property;
2. interfere with the efforts of Fire Guardians authorized in this policy to extinguish fires or preserve life or property;
3. interfere with the operation of the Department's equipment or apparatus required to extinguish fires or preserve life or property;
4. light an Outdoor Fire, a Structure Fire or an Incinerator Fire without first taking sufficient precautions to ensure that the fire can be kept under control at all times; or
5. provide false, incomplete or misleading information on or with respect to the Controlled Burn Notification.

When a fire is intentionally lit DURING A FIRE RESTRICTION OR TOTAL FIRE BAN, the owner or occupant of the land shall:

1. extinguish the fire immediately; or
2. where the owner/occupant is unable to extinguish the fire immediately, they shall call 911 and report accordingly.

**4. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all private and public owned land within the Special Areas boundaries, including but not limited to SAB owned and/or operated campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, and rest areas.

- Policy 14-05 – Campfires/Fireworks in SAB Campgrounds & Parks
- Policy 16-01 – Fire Services

**5. APPROVED BY CHAIR:**

*Shaune Kovitch, Chair  
Special Areas Board*



**APPENDIX A – Tiered Fire Ban System**

Approved Fire Activities						
Activity	Fire Advisory		Fire Restriction		Total Fire Ban	
Charcoal briquette <sup>1</sup>	Yes		Yes		No	
Controlled Burn Notification <sup>2</sup>	May be restricted or suspended				Suspended	
Exploding Targets <sup>4</sup>	No		No		No	
Indoor wood fire <sup>6</sup>	Yes		Yes		No	
Open-flame oil devices <sup>7</sup>	Yes		Yes		No	
Propane / natural gas-powered devices <sup>8</sup>	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Safe campfires <sup>9</sup>	Yes		Yes		No	
Fire Activities in SAB Campgrounds (Supervised/ Un-supervised Sites)						
Activity	*Supervised	**Un-supervised	Supervised	Un-supervised	Supervised	Un-supervised
Charcoal briquette <sup>1</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	
Cook-stove fires <sup>3</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	
Exploding Targets <sup>4</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	
Fireworks <sup>5</sup>	Approval from SAB RFC or RDFC through the Controlled Burn Notification system.			No	No	
Open-flame oil devices <sup>7</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	
Propane / natural gas-powered devices <sup>8</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Safe campfires <sup>9</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	

*\*Supervised: Special Areas campgrounds and parks commonly known as Blood Indian Park, Gooseberry Lake Provincial Park, and Prairie Oasis Park.*

*\*\*Un-supervised: Special Areas campgrounds, parks, random camping areas, or rest areas; commonly known as Bindloss, Blood Indian Overflow Camping Area, Buffalo, Carolside, Cereal, Dorothy, Esther, Hemaruka, Jenner, Little Fish Lake, Naco, New Brigden, and the Memorial Hwy 9 & 36 Rest Area.*

1. Charcoal briquettes are a fuel source for cooking, grilling and heating.
2. Controlled Burn Notification shall mean completion of the notification form by the person intending on a controlled burn through the Special Areas Board Website or by contacting the local District Office.
3. Cook-stove fires are used for cooking, grilling and heating, commonly housed in camp kitchen structures.
4. Exploding targets are devices that react and potentially explode when struck.
5. Fireworks shall mean pyrotechnic devices designed to burn and explode, including consumer fireworks, display fireworks, and special effect pyrotechnics. This definition includes firecrackers.
6. Indoor wood fires are those inside a privately owned, residential structure (for life safety purposes) and contained within a device with a chimney and spark arrestor.
7. Open-flame oil devices are any device that uses an oil-based fuel to produce a visible flame that is not enclosed or shielded.
8. Propane/ natural gas-powered devices are appliances commonly used for cooking, grilling and heating fueled by propane or natural gas.
9. Safe campfires shall mean wood campfires within a metal, or brick fire ring. They are required to:
  - a. be on rock, gravel, sand, or another non-combustible surfaces that extend at least one metre around the fire;
  - b. have a responsible person in attendance to keep fire under control at all times and extinguish before leaving; and
  - c. have on hand enough water to extinguish the fire.
 Safe campfires on private land include private land campgrounds and private land recreation areas.