

September 6, 2006

Hot, dry weather leads to fire bans in Alberta

Edmonton... A high pressure system across Alberta has created unseasonably warm weather for the beginning of September. This, in addition to minimal rainfall, has increased the wildfire hazard to a level requiring two fire bans in the Forest Protection Area for south-western and west-central Alberta.

Two Fire Control Orders will go into effect at 1 p.m. on September 6. The south-western fire ban includes an area north of the Waterton Lakes National Park boundary to just west of Nanton. The west-central ban includes the Grande Prairie area, south of the Peace River, west to the B.C. border, south to the northern border of Willmore Wilderness Park and east to the Little Smoky River, just north of Fox Creek. The attached backgrounder includes a map and detailed description of the area affected by the fire bans.

Under the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act*, fires are banned in these areas until further notice. Any existing fires, including those set under the authority of a fire permit, must be immediately extinguished.

The only exceptions are:

- fires which are contained in cooking and heating appliances and which are fuelled by fluids or gasses;
- fires contained within the fire facilities of designated camping and recreation areas; and
- fires contained within industrial facilities or on industrial sites approved by a forest officer.

These bans do not apply to cities, towns, villages or summer villages in the ban areas; however, these jurisdictions may issue their own fire bans. For more information about these bans, contact your local municipal office, fire department or visit www.albertafirebans.ca.

Hazard conditions in these areas will continue to be monitored on a daily basis. Albertans who live in or are visiting the fire ban areas are urged to use extreme caution. Off-highway vehicle users are reminded to make sure hot spots, such as the engine and exhaust, are free of burnable material such as dry grass and twigs.

For a copy of the complete Fire Control Orders, with a detailed description of the fire ban areas, visit www.srd.gov.ab.ca/wildfires. To report a wildfire, call 310-FIRE.

Media enquiries may be directed to: Wildfire Information Officer
Provincial Forest Fire Centre
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