



## FOREST PROTECTION AREA OF ALBERTA

Alberta's Forest Protection Area (FPA) covers approximately 60 per cent of the province's landmass. The province is responsible for managing wildfires in this area. Wildfire protection in Alberta is shared between Alberta Wildfire (inside the FPA) and the municipalities and counties outside the FPA.

For more information:  
[wildfire.alberta.ca/wildfire-maps/administrative-boundaries.aspx](http://wildfire.alberta.ca/wildfire-maps/administrative-boundaries.aspx)

## FOREST AND PRAIRIE PROTECTION ACT

If you're responsible for starting a wildfire, you can be charged under the Forest and Prairie Protection Act (FPPA), fined and held liable for all costs associated with fighting the wildfire. All Alberta legislation, including the FPPA, can be found at the Queen's Printer.

For more information:  
[qp.alberta.ca](http://qp.alberta.ca)



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[wildfire.alberta.ca](http://wildfire.alberta.ca)

[PFFC.WFIO@gov.ab.ca](mailto:PFFC.WFIO@gov.ab.ca)

1-866-FYI-FIRE



ALBERTA WILDFIRE

REPORT WILDFIRES  
**310-FIRE**

Alberta  
**FIREBANS**.ca



Alberta Government

OCTOBER 2016

ISBN 978-1-4601-2237-2 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-4601-2238-9 (Online)



# BRUSH PILES & WINDROWS

SAFE BURNING PRACTICES



# BRUSH PILES & WINDROWS

Brush piles and windrows are commonly used to burn woody debris from land clearing for agricultural and development purposes. Alberta Wildfire can advise you on how to construct your burn site so it meets the guidelines for safe burning practices required for your fire permit.

## GETTING A PERMIT

A fire permit details safe burning practices that will help prevent your fire from becoming a wildfire. It is required for all fires, except campfires, in the Forest Protection Area of Alberta. Fire permits are free and can be requested from Alberta Wildfire. To locate your nearest office go to [firepermits.alberta.ca](http://firepermits.alberta.ca) or call 310-0000. Fire permits are required from March 1 to October 31.

## PERMIT CANCELLATIONS

Fire permits may be suspended or cancelled if the fire hazard in the area changes. In these situations, the permit holder will be notified and must immediately extinguish all fires. In the event of a fire ban or restriction, all fire permits can be suspended.

## FALL AND WINTER BURNING

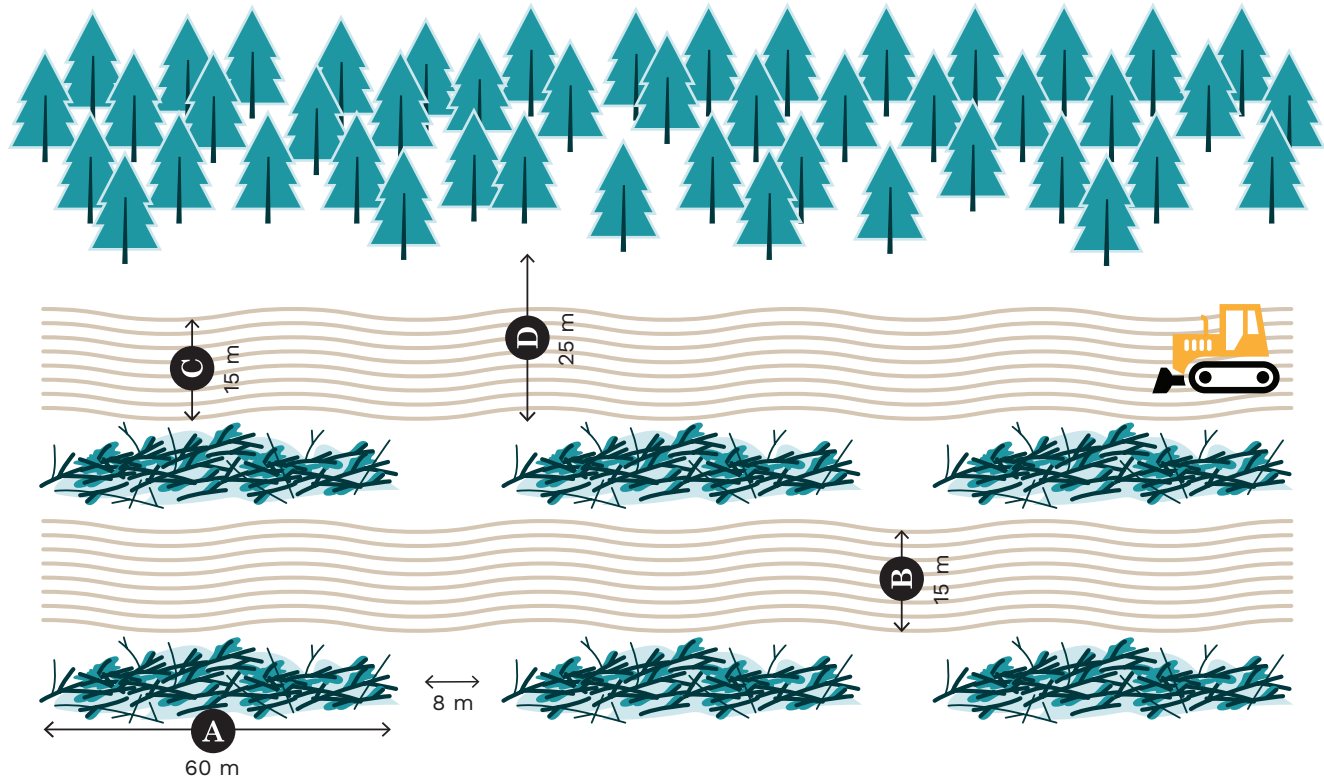
Fire permits allow staff to know where burning is approved so firefighters and aircraft are free to fight wildfires. They are not required in winter, however following safe burning practices during this period will help prevent holdover fires that can start spring wildfires. Although the snow helps reduce the risk of the fire burning into the ground, we recommend that you check all fall and winter burn sites to ensure that the fire is out. Walk the burn area and roll over any debris to check for hot spots.

## PREPARE THE SITE

- Brush piles and windrows must be at least 25 metres from trees and bushes.
- A fireguard 15 metres wide and cleared down to the mineral soil must completely surround the area.
- Windrows cannot be more than 60 metres in length with a minimum eight metre break between each windrow.
- Windrows and brush piles cannot be more than 6 metres wide.
- Parallel windrows must be separated by at least 15 metres.
- To allow for a cleaner burn, ensure that you reduce the amount of soil and dirt in your windrows or brush piles. Clean burning reduces the likelihood of smoke issues and smouldering fires. Smouldering fires can last for months and emerge as a wildfire in warm, dry weather.

## MINIMUM SPACING FOR WINDROWS

- A** Windrows to be broken into 60 metre segments with 8 metres between the end of each.
- B** Parallel windrows need 15 metres of cleared area between each other.
- C** A fire guard of 15 metres cleared of all debris is needed around the material to be burned.
- D** Between uncleared land or standing timber or bush, the minimum distance must be 25 metres.



## SAFE BURNING PRACTICES

- Never leave your fire unattended.
- Only burn what you can control and follow the conditions of your permit.
- Have your fire permit ready to present if requested.
- Watch for sparks and burning material that may result in smaller fires. Larger fires can send these sparks over several kilometres, especially when burning in the wind.
- If the wind is gusting over 15 km/hour or increases beyond the limit on your permit, immediately extinguish your fire.
- Have the tools and equipment listed in your permit available to put out any spot fires that may occur.

## AFTER YOU BURN

- Spread or stir the debris to speed up extinguishing the fire.
- Re-pile unburnt debris to ensure it burns as needed.
- Walk the area and check for heat. Fire can smoulder underground only to reappear under drier conditions as a wildfire.
- Insert a probe into the burned area and then feel it for heat to ensure nothing is burning in the ground.
- Water down and extinguish hot spots.
- Carefully inspect the area in the days and weeks after your burn is complete.
- Extinguish any areas still burning and ensure that they are cool to the touch.