



Wildfire Management Branch Best Management Practice

Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness
for Industrial and Commercial Operations

Table of Contents

Objective	1
Background	1
Legal Authority.....	2
Contact Information.....	5
FireSmart Links.....	6
Appendix A: Summer Work Location and Contact Information Form	7
Appendix B: Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan	7
Appendix C: Minimum Fire Fighting Equipment Recommendations for Industrial and Commercial Camps.....	8

Objective

The mandate of the Ministry of Environment's Wildfire Management Branch is to work collaboratively and proactively with Saskatchewan's Industrial and Commercial operators to assist them in mitigating the impact of wildfire to their operations.

This document provides wildfire related best management practices for Industrial and Commercial Sectors operating within wildfire management areas in Saskatchewan.

Background

Saskatchewan has an active wildfire regime, averaging 435 fires per year with more than 572,500 hectares burnt on an annual basis. Approximately half of all of the wildfires are human-caused, with the industrial / commercial sector being responsible for six per cent of the total number of human caused wildfires. Natural, lightning caused wildfires, regularly impact industrial and commercial operations within the province. Regardless of the cause, wildfires can and occasionally do result in operational disruptions and direct loss to industrial and commercial operations.

Information provided to Wildfire Management Branch, in the *Summer Work Location and Contact Information Form* found in **Appendix "A"**, serves to help the ministry protect industrial and commercial operations within the provincial forest. Information in the *Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan* within **Appendix "B"** is a requirement under *The Wildfire Act* and *The Wildfire Regulations* and serves to assist industrial and commercial operations in protecting their operations within the provincial forest and on designated parks. **Appendix "C"** provides a *Recommended List of Minimum Fire-Fighting Equipment* to be held at a strategic point(s) within a camp and the active operating area. Every person conducting a commercial or industrial operation within a provincial forest during the fire season (April 1st to October 31st) must have fire-fighting equipment that is readily available and kept in a serviceable condition.

The details within these templates will help to ensure priority values are protected and good communication lines are in place to facilitate information sharing and an appropriate fire suppression response. The Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan template was designed to help industrial and commercial operators meet the current legal requirements under *The Wildfire Act*.

Legal Authority

The Wildfire Act and *The Wildfire Regulations* provide the legislative requirements for industrial and commercial operators. Some of these requirements include; how to manage their use of fire; their ability to respond to fire; and to ensure they are prepared for wildfire.

Listed below are some key portions of the Act and Regulations that are applicable to this document, clients are encouraged to view the full version of the Act and Regulations. An electronic copy of each can be accessed [here](#).

Section 2(h) of the Act defines designated land (the area where a wildfire prevention and preparedness plan for Industrial and Commercial operations is required:

- (i) In a provincial forest; and
- (ii) Any park land or part or category of park land that is designated in the regulations.

Section 2 (l) of the Act defines Industrial and Commercial Operations

- (i) An activity carried on in connection with forestry operations, mining, oil and gas operations, mineral exploration, road construction and maintenance, the operation of public utilities, outfitting, peat moss operations, the operation of institutional camps and railway operations; and
- (ii) Any activity or development, other than one mentioned in subclause (i) that is prescribed in the regulations or the code:

Section 2 (gg) of the Act defines wildfire management areas as:

- (i) A provincial forest, including a provincial forest within the boundaries of a rural municipality or the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District;
- (ii) park land;
- (iii) vacant Crown land; and
- (iv) Every quarter section of land lying wholly or partly with 4.5 Kilometres of the boundaries of a provincial forest;

Section 17(1) of the Act indicates that no person shall start a fire during the wildfire season unless they have a burn notification number in the following locations:

- (a) In a provincial forest
- (b) In a quarter section of land lying wholly or partly within 4.5 kilometres of the boundaries of a provincial forest; or
- (c) In park land.

Section 5(1) of *The Wildfire Regulations* defines the period commencing on April 1 and ending on October 31 in each year as the wildfire season for the purposes of the Act.

Section 7 of *The Wildfire Regulations* describes what information is required to obtain a burn notification number. Required information includes:

- a) The name, address and telephone number, or other means of immediate contact, of the person who proposes to start the fire;
- b) The location of the proposed burn area, including a legal description or georeferenced position of the land on which the proposed burn area is situated and the total size of the area to be burned;
- c) The purpose of the proposed fire;
- d) Any other information relating to the proposed fire that the minister requires.

Information on burn notification numbers can be accessed [here](#).

Section 19 of the Act defines the responsibility for fire suppression for industrial and commercial operations;

- 1) The Operator is the person who conducts the Industrial or Commercial operation.
- 2) Every operator shall comply with the requirements set out in the regulations in carrying out the industrial or commercial operation.
- 3) When a fire is burning within a part of designated lands on which an industrial or commercial operation is actively being conducted or is located, the operator is responsible, without compensation, for initially controlling and extinguishing the fire
- 4) Subject to any fire control agreement entered into pursuant to section 76, the operator shall pay all costs associated with controlling and extinguishing the fire mentioned in subsection (3).
- 5) The Operator shall:
 - a. Immediately notify a ministry officer of the fire; and
 - b. If it is safe in the operators opinion given the circumstances and conditions applicable to the fire, commence fighting the fire until:
 - i. Relieved by a ministry officer; or
 - ii. The fire is extinguished
- 6) If a wildfire was started as a direct or indirect result of the activities of an industrial or commercial operation or if those activities contributed to the spread of a wildfire or interfered with or impeded the ability to suppress a wildfire, the operator is liable to the Crown for any costs incurred by the minister in controlling and extinguishing the wildfire and for any damage to the Crown as a result of the wildfire.

Section 20 of the Act identifies the requirement for wildfire prevention and preparedness plans for industrial or commercial operations;

- 1) The operator of an industrial or commercial operation on designated lands shall prepare and submit to the minister for consideration a wildfire prevention and preparedness plan:
 - a) Before the start of a wildfire season; or
 - b) If the industrial or commercial operation commences after the start of a wildfire season, before beginning to conduct the industrial or commercial operation.

Section 23 of the Act provides for designation of high fire risk activities and additional fire prevention measures;

Section 24 of the Act provides information related to industrial or commercial burning;

***The Canadian Aviation Regulations* provides legislation related to the use of aircraft around fires that are important to be aware of. If your company uses aircraft as part of your operations it is important to be aware of this legislation.**

It is important to understand that the existence of a wildfire invokes **automatic airspace restrictions** under the *Canadian Aviation Regulations*; regardless of the presence or absence of suppression aircraft. When suppression aircraft are working on a wildfire they can be contacted on 122.85 Mhz AM.

Section 601.15 provides direction related to Forest Fire Aircraft Operating Restrictions.

No person shall operate an aircraft

- a) over a forest fire area, or over any area that is located within five nautical miles of a forest fire area, at an altitude of less than 3000 feet above ground level, or
- b) in any airspace that is described in a NOTAM (Notice To Airman) issued pursuant to section 601.16

Section 601.16 relates to the Issuance of NOTAM for Forest Fire Operations.

The Minister may issue a NOTAM that relates to restrictions on the operation of aircraft in the case of a forest fire and that describes

- a) the location and dimensions of the forest fire area, and
- b) the airspace in which forest fire control operations are being conducted

Section 601.15 offers some exception where section 601.15 does not apply.

Section 601.15 does not apply to

- a) persons who are operating an aircraft at the request of an appropriate fire control authority

If an Industrial or Commercial Operation has access to their own aircraft to carry out wildfire suppression actions as authorized under Section 19 of *The Wildfire Act* then Wildfire Management could delegate the responsibility and authority to suppress fires using those aircraft as long as a current Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan is in place. Any pilots conducting this sort of operation must follow the same operational and communications protocols as aircraft would under direct Wildfire Management authority. Required information can be found under the Ministry Aviation Services “Call When Needed” Agreement and Pilot’s Handbook. See link to these resources in the FireSmart link section below.

Contact Information

For more information or assistance contact your local **Forest Protection Officer**. Go [here](#) to determine the forest protection officer in your area.

To Report a Wildfire

Toll Free Wildfire Hotline: 1-800-667-9660 or Dial **911**

Wildfire Management Website

For daily fire weather updates, active forest fire reports, fire ban advisories, FireSmart information, and more visit: www.saskatchewan.ca/fire

FireSmart Links

1. Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
[Best Management Practices for Wildfire Prevention & FireSmart Guidebook for the Oil and Gas Industry](#)
2. Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
[Emergency Preparedness Guide for Hazards Associated with Wildfires](#)
3. The NFPA 1141 document:
[Standard for Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Wildland, Rural, and Suburban Areas](#)
4. The NFPA 1144 document:
[Standard for Protection of Life and Property from Wildfire](#)
5. The Partners in Protection manual:
[FireSmart - Protecting Your Community From Wildfire](#)
6. Ministry Aviation Services
[Call When Needed" Agreement & Pilots Handbook](#)

Appendix A: Summer Work Location & Contact Information Form

This form must be filled out and forwarded to your Ministry of Environment Wildfire Management Branch contact. Your contact will be the local Forest Protection Officer responsible for the area that you are working in. See the Forest Protection Officer link on page five of this document to determine the appropriate contact for your operation.

Please fill out and pass on a *Summer Work Location & Contact* form for each work location and update as required to ensure Wildfire Management Branch is aware of where personnel and other values at risk from wildfire are located. Whenever possible provide in a digital format. If the details of any work locations are already documented within your *Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan for Industrial and Commercial Operations* form, and submitted to your Forest Protection Officer, then there is no need to complete this form. If you are uncertain if your location is already included in a plan, please contact the area Forest Protection Officer.

[Access the form here.](#)

Appendix B: Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Plan

Please fill out this form and send to the Forest Protection Officer responsible for the area that you are working in.

*(**Attach additional sheets as required**)*

[Access the form here.](#)

Appendix C:

Minimum Fire Fighting Equipment Recommendations For Industrial and Commercial Operations

Crew Size	Portable Water Containers	Fire Shovels	Axe or Pulaskis	Chainsaw	Fire Pumps
1-5	2	2	1		
6-10	4	4	2		
11-20	6	10	4	1	1
21-30	8	14	5	1	1
31-40	12	18	7	1	1
41+	Sufficient equipment in a combination and type to properly equip each person with a minimum of one fire-fighting tool			1	1

Where a pump is required, this shall include having an adequate water source capable of supplying a minimum of 500 gallons to any location of the work site. The camp should have enough hose to cover the whole work site (from water source to the far edge of camp) or have a mobile 500-gallon water tank with enough hose to cover your site.