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## **Brush Fire Danger Season**

### Rules on recreational burning

**Kent, Wash. - June 19, 2015-** Although we have not hit the hottest and driest months of the year, we are already beginning to see signs of what is to come with brush fires springing up on both sides of the Cascades.

This year, due to limited rainfall, we could see many more and larger brush fires locally.

What causes brush fires? Brush fires can be started by any heat source. Along roadways, many of the fires are caused by discarded burning materials such as cigarettes. Even cigarettes that the user thinks have been extinguished can contain enough heat to start a fire in dry grass or brush. Low hanging chains from large trucks, boats, and camping trailers can cause sparks that lead to fires. Trains and rail grinding can also start fires.

While most brush fires near roadways are more of a nuisance than a life-safety hazard, they do cause a visual distraction, can lead to limited visibility due to the smoke, and create an ugly burned out area.

Brush fires away from roadways can be the result of fireworks, discarded cigarettes, campfires, land clearing fires, malicious mischief, and other "controlled" fires. These fires can be especially dangerous because of nearby structures, including homes.

In the Kent Fire Department RFA response area there are limitations on recreational burning. Recreational fires are defined as cooking fires and campfires that use charcoal or dry-seasoned firewood. Recreational fires are allowed within the City limits of Kent, SeaTac, Covington, and unincorporated King County without a permit. They can be above-ground portable fireplaces or in-ground fire pits.

Portable outdoor fireplaces such as "chimineas" or similar devices must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and cannot be operated within 15 feet of multifamily dwellings and commercial structures. There are no distance requirements for one and two-family dwellings.

In-ground fire pits must be built at least 50 feet from any structure and 25 feet from any combustible material. Pit fires cannot exceed two feet in height and three feet in diameter.

Burn barrels are prohibited at all times.

Use fire carefully and never leave any outdoor fire unattended. In addition, supervise children near any fire and keep them safe by creating a "kid free" zone around campfires.

If you see someone discarding burning material or using fire in an unsafe manner, call 9-1-1 immediately.

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