

Hedley Improvement District

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FIRE COMPLAINTS POLICY

DATED – January 19, 2023

- 1) Any resident wanting to have BACKYARD, RECREATIONAL fires must obtain a Burn Permit. This is FREE of charge and is good for the calendar year. Recreational fires must conform to limits established by the Hedley Fire Department.
- 2) Exceptions – Propane, Natural Gas, and Charcoal BBQ's within reason. In addition, Natural Gas and Propane fire pits are acceptable and do not require a Permit.
- 3) The Ministry of the Environment has the Authority to restrict or ban open burning for specific areas and times of year, because of pollution or the risk of Wildfire or pollution.

According to the Ministry of the Environment, “Backyard Burning” is the practice of burning Waste Material with or without vegetation or vegetable debris on PRIVATE property.

As such, the burning of any material other than RAW wood, requires permission under the Environmental Management Act. To be clear, the torching of Demolition waste and Household Garbage in a Burn Barrel is ILLEGAL. Also, for B.C. Residents the mixing of Waste Material and Vegetable Debris as a way to dispose of waste matter.

Complaints about excessive smoke and Large Flames from backyard fires or suspected burning of prohibited materials may be registered at the Environmental Complaint Line at environmentalcomplaints@gov.bc.ca.

- 4) Burning permits will state the materials that are banned under the Environment Management Act. To prevent the release of dangerous toxins, the Province of B.C. prohibits open burning of the following matter: Domestic Garbage, Construction Refuse, Hazardous Waste. – Must go to Landfill for a COST.

Keremeos Landfill: 250-490-4129 – **DO NOT BURN** - Recycle as much as possible
– Here is just an example.

“This expanded materials list will allow more material to be recycled, keep it out of landfills and stop it from littering the environment,” said Tamara Burns, executive director, Recycle BC. “Residents play a key role in recycling this material by enabling it to be collected – by putting it into their bins or taking materials to a depot.”

A complete list of banned materials can be obtained from the FACT SHEET on Burning Requirements. This is available for the Ministry of the Environment at https://www2.gov.ca.ca/assets/gov/environment/waste-management/garbage/fs_burningreq.pdf.

NEW: Newly accepted blue-box items include:

- plastic plates, bowls and cups/plastic cutlery and straws.
- plastic food storage containers/plastic hangers (that come with clothing).
- paper plates, bowls and cups (with thin plastic lining/aluminum foil/aluminum-foil baking dishes and pie plates; and
- metal storage tins (thin gauge).
- plastic sandwich and freezer bags/plastic shrink wrap.
- flexible plastic drop sheets and covering/flexible plastic bubble wrap (no bubble wrap-lined paper/flexible plastic recycling bags (blue, clear bags, or yellow or blue bags used for curb-side collection); and
- flexible plastic carry-out shopping bags (reusable).

Furniture can be recycled – Value Village, Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, and others.

Appliances can be taken to the Keremeos landfill for a cost/ Electronics – Free – Computers, Smoke detectors, T.V.’s, Lights/Glass are recyclable, including Xmas lights.

Oil, Anti-Freeze, can be recycle Lead based is charged. Household Paint – Not accepted at Keremeos facility.

Treated wood or painted – Charge for these/

Pressurized tanks – Small – Free Large- Charged

Mattresses can be taken to the Keremeos landfill for a cost.

Free TIRE recycling at a retailer or Landfill. Does not include Oversized or Tires on Rims – There is a cost for these.

5) The Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations may restrict or prohibit OPEN fires to limit the risk of WILDFIRES. This is usually during “High” to “Extreme” fire danger. Contact the BC Wildfire Service to find out about the restrictions or call **800 663-5555** toll-free, or *5555* cell to Report a WILDFIRE, smoke columns and violations of wildfire regulations in British Columbia.

Residents ARE NOT ALLOWED to have backyard or recreational fires when a FIRE BAN has been declared in the area due to drought or hazardous burning conditions.

- 6) Residents are not permitted to create a nuisance! Burning permits will also show that a permit will be withdrawn for the remainder of the year if the Hedley Fire Department or HID Trustees receive complaints about a citizen's excessive flames, smoke, or burning practices.
- 7) If there is ONE complaint received about extreme smoke or flames from any backyard fire, or the person is suspected of burning household trash, prohibited items, or has lit a backyard fire during a fire ban, Two Trustees or Two Members of the Hedley Fire Department will issue a verbal warning. One Fire Department member must be an Officer. In addition to a verbal warning, a letter will be sent to the property owner, stating the Burn Permit will be invalid. If another grievance arises about his/her illegal burning activities or nuisance fires authorities will be called.
- 8) With that, Improvement Districts are not allowed to Levy Fines. Still if the situation persists and the owner continues to ignore verbal and written notices, that person will be reported to the Ministry of the Environment at environmentalcomplaints@gov.bc.ca or to the BC Wildfire Service at 1-888-797-1717. Both of these government agencies can impose fines for creating air pollution or for open burning during a fire ban. Another avenue is through the 24 RAPP (Report all Poachers and Polluters) Line 1-877-952-7277.
- 9) Furthermore, please remember that your Fire Department is **VOLUNTEER!** As such, there is not enough personnel to save the residence that is ablaze, so they will work on protecting your neighbours' homes and businesses. Also, fires bring higher insurance rates for all residents.

10) Finally, the Department and HID are seeking NEW Recruits to be part of the crew. This is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable work experience, learn new skills, and have a solid background for career openings, especially in professional firefighting, ambulance crews, paramedics, and other areas. Of course, you would be a Valued and Respected Member of the Community. Therefore, it would be great to have NEW people in town join, especially Young-Adults. There is also a small monetary benefit after passing probation, but this is mostly VOLUNTEER.