

For Immediate Release
March, 2019

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
BC Wildfire Service – Coastal Fire Centre

Caution urged when burning seedling containers

Every fire season the Coastal Fire Centre responds to a couple of forest fires in slash caused by the burning of seedling containers. It is common practice in the reforestation industry to dispose of cardboard seedling containers by burning rather than disposing in local landfills or other means.



Photo 1. Planters watch some of their hard work go up in flames.



Photo 2. Stain on road shows where boxes were lit on fire before spotting uphill onto slash.



Photo 3. Evidence from an investigation showing that ash from cardboard boxes had carried onto slash but failed to ignite.

Burning seedling containers is considered a Category 2 open fire subject to the provisions of the Wildfire Regulation. The size of the pile must not exceed 2 metres in height and 3 metres in width. Burning seedling containers is known to create embers and ash that can travel significant distances and float over fuel breaks to start a fire (see Photo 2).

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The fire must only be lit when it is safe to do so (i.e. not on a windy day or on a landing covered in slash), the fire is surrounded by a fuel break wide enough to prevent spread (i.e. such as in a rock quarry or gravel pit), the fire is watched and patrolled by a person with a handtool and access to a fire suppression system in the event of an escape. The fire must be fully extinguished before the person leaves the burn area. All person caused wildfires are preventable and there are provisions for Government to recover fire fighting costs and damages to Crown resources caused by open burning escapes.

For more information please contact the Coastal Fire Centre at 250-951-4222. To access the Wildfire Regulation and for more information about open burning please refer to the BC Wildfire Service website at: <http://www.bcwildfire.ca>

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