

Township of
Langley



Est. 1873

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 1, 2018

REMINDER: BACKYARD FIRES ARE DANGEROUS AND ILLEGAL

With summer on the horizon, Township of Langley firefighters are warning residents of the dangers of outdoor burning and issuing a reminder that backyard fires are banned throughout the municipality.

“The Fire Department understands that people might want to cook over open flames or have social gatherings around a fire pit, but open fires that use wood and other solid fuels are not allowed - for everyone’s safety and to protect the environment,” said Pat Walker, Assistant Chief, Prevention.

Backyard bonfires create smoke that inundates the air with particles which make breathing uncomfortable for others and cause damage to the environment, Walker said. As well, open air fires pose a risk of running out of control, especially with the long, hot summers that have been experienced in BC over the past few years making grass and trees extremely dry and flammable.

As well, the tragic loss of a teenage girl in Terrace who died last week following an accident involving a backyard fire pit highlights the dangers of outdoor burning, Walker said.

“People think that because you own property, you are able to have a fire in your backyard, but that is not the case,” Walker said. “We are not trying to prevent people from having fun – we are trying to keep our residents safe, both those in the vicinity of the flames and those exposed to the smoke and pollutants that outdoor burning creates.”

Open air burning is only allowed in the Township of Langley during permitted burning seasons, which are held in the spring and fall to allow residents to clean up their yard and garden debris or to clear land. Permits are required and burning is allowed only in certain rural areas, weather permitting. Burning season ended on April 30.

Throughout the year, the burning of garbage, paper, construction waste, and fire logs, and the use of fire pits and chimineas, is prohibited. Campfires are allowed only in regional parks, and only when weather conditions allow.

Residents who notice backyard fires should report them to the Fire Department at 604.532.7500 during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm. During the evenings and on weekends, fires should be reported to the Department's non-emergency line at 604.543.6700 or 911. If you are in doubt of the origin of a fire, call 911.

Those caught with illegal open fires can face ticketing and hefty fines.

Those who want to cook in the great outdoors should use charcoal, natural gas, or propane fires contained within Canadian Standards Association-approved appliances for the sole purpose of cooking.

To keep outdoor grilling season safe, the Fire Department recommends checking the gas tank hose for leaks before using the barbecue or appliance. A propane leak will release bubbles when a light soap and water solution is applied to the hose.

Propane and charcoal barbecue grills should only be used outdoors, well away from the home and deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

Keep the grill clean by removing grease or fat build-up from the grills and trays below.

Always be sure the gas grill lid is open before lighting it. If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least five minutes before re-lighting.

Never leave the grill unattended and ensure children and pets stay at least one meter (three feet) away from the cooking area.

When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing of them in a metal container.

For more information, visit tol.ca/burning or call the Township of Langley Fire Department at 604.532.7500.