

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Residents asked to refrain from backyard burning during COVID-19 emergency

Duncan, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is requesting residents not engage in backyard burning and limit their use of woodstoves given the respiratory impact of COVID-19.

While backyard burning is permitted in CVRD electoral areas between March 15 and April 15 when the venting index is 'good,' the CVRD and regional medical health officer are urging residents not to burn and consider the health of their neighbours.

"It is critical that we not elevate the risk for anyone who may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, and local air quality is imperative given the nature of this virus," said Dr. Shannon Waters, Medical Health Officer for the Cowichan Valley Region. "Like social distancing and washing our hands, this is a very simple action that we can take to make our community safer and lessen the burden on our health system during a very uncertain time."

CVRD recycling centres accept yard waste free of charge. The City of Duncan, Town of Ladysmith and Town of Lake Cowichan do not permit open burning at any time of year, and the Municipality of North Cowichan has its own burn restrictions. With warmer weather returning, residents are also asked to limit the use of their woodstoves, particularly in densely populated areas where chimney smoke can have an immediate effect on neighbourhood air quality.

The CVRD has a wealth of material related to regional air quality on its website, including a real-time air quality map of the Cowichan region. To learn more visit www.cvr.bc.ca/cleartheair. To report an illegal burn, contact CVRD bylaw enforcement by email at ian.macdonald@cvrd.bc.ca.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Kris Schumacher
Manager, Communications & Engagement
250.746.2635
kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca