

Check your local municipality burning bylaws to find out if you need a burning permit. If you are within the provincial burn permit area, you need to obtain a burning permit. (April 1 - Nov. 15 only)

Outdoor Fires

According to Part 5 of *The Wildfires Act*:

No person shall:

- start a fire that is likely to burn out of control, burns out of control, or endangers life, land or property
- obstruct an officer, a temporary fire guardian or a person in charge of a wildfire protection operation in performing his or her duties
- fail to follow the direction or order of an officer or person in charge of wildfire protection operations
- impede wildfire protection operations

No person shall start a fire to guard property, clear land, or burn debris, crops or stubble, unless the land on which the fire is started is completely surrounded by a strip of land not less than six metres wide, **AND**

- the strip is free of inflammable material or
- all inflammable material on the strip is covered by snow or water

No person shall on any land:

- start a fire
 - without taking sufficient precautions to ensure the fire can be kept under controlor
 - when weather conditions are conducive to a fire burning out of control
- fail to take reasonable steps to prevent a fire from spreading
- place any burning or smouldering matter in a place where it may cause a fire that could spread
- conduct an activity that may cause a fire to spread
- leave the place where he or she has started a fire without ensuring the fire is out

Outdoor Fire Safety

Tips to Ensure a Safe Burn

As a farmer, there are times when you have no choice but to start a controlled fire to burn things like windrows, grass, stubble and piles. Make sure you follow the Dos and Don'ts listed on page 10 to guide you towards a safe burn. Here are some additional tips to ensure the safe burning of windrows, grass and stubble, and piles.

Burn Barrels and Fire Pits

Burn barrels and fire pits are necessities for most farms. To squash their potential to be wildfire starters, **just follow these simple rules:**

- Always cover your burn barrel with a metal screen. This keeps any stray sparks or burning debris under control.
- Drill holes in your barrel (if they're not already there) to ensure proper ventilation.
- Clear away any debris or grass for at least three metres around your barrel or fire pit. You can also surround it with small stones, gravel or sand to contain the embers and hot ash.
- Locate your barrels and fire pits at least 30 metres from any structures or standing trees. The ideal location is close to a water supply, and sheltered from the wind.
- A safer way to dispose of debris is to take it to your local landfill.

Dry grass, grain/hay fields and pastureland

Reducing dry grass, hay and stubble will help prevent a yard fire from spreading, or stop a fire from entering your yard.

Here are some guidelines to follow:

- Keep your grass cut. A patch of mowed lawn can slow the spread of a fast-moving grass fire or cause it to burn itself out.
- Work up grain fields next to building sites - or at least work up a strip to act as a fuel break - to prevent any fires from coming into your yard.
- Before putting your tillage equipment away for the winter, take a few passes around the yard to make sure nothing's been missed.
- Wait until very late in the season to cut any hayfields close to the yard as this will minimize re-growth. You can also mow a strip next to the building to act as a fire guard.
- Allow livestock to graze in the fields close to the yard. This will help reduce the vegetation and potential fire hazard.
- Till around the outside perimeter of your pastureland. This will create a fire break that could save the field from burning, or stop a fire from spreading to your other fields.

TIP:

Never leave your burn barrel or fire pit unattended when in use.

STUBBLE BURNING

TIP:

Always call before you burn. To check daily burning authorizations call: 1-800-265-1233 or visit: manitoba.ca/agriculture

TIP:

A highly visible, reflective and fire-resistant address sign (ex: metal sign and posts) can be your best friend during fire season, as it can help emergency responders find your place.



Windrows:

- Avoid building windrows on swamps/bogs.
- Use a brush rake or excavator to reduce the amount of dirt in the rows. This promotes better burning.
- Pack the rows as tightly as possible.
- Build the windrows across the direction of the prevailing wind.
- Make sure windrows are no longer than 60 metres, and are situated a minimum of 25 metres from standing timber.
- Ensure that at least 15 metres of bare mineral soil surround all windrows.

Grass and Stubble

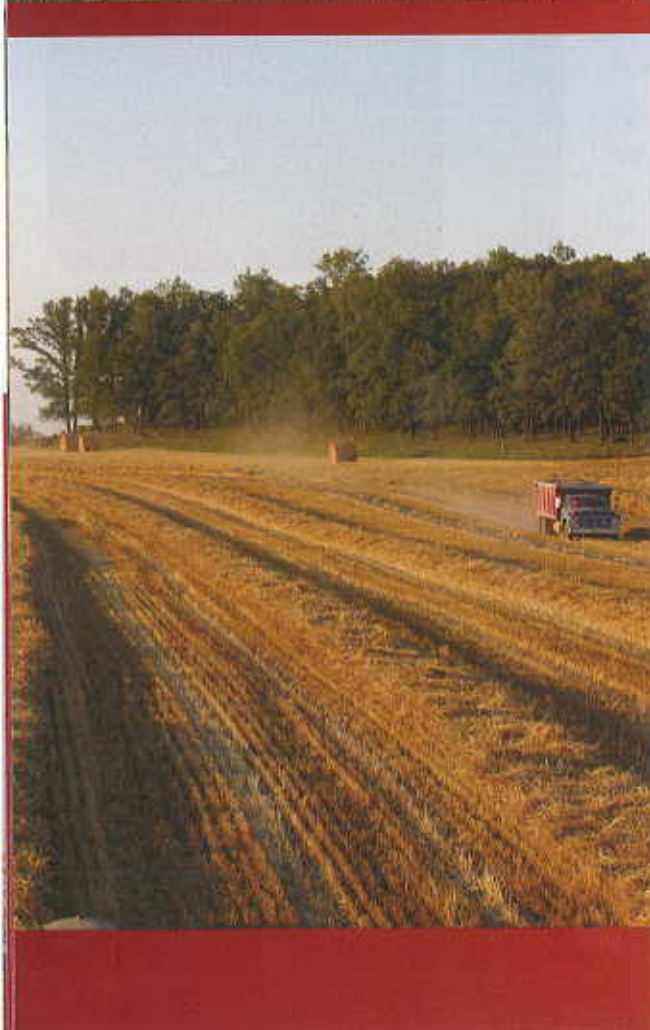
Farmers face significant challenges when burning in the spring and fall. Weather conditions need to be ideal and fields must be prepared to contain the fires so they don't spread too far, too fast. *Here are some guidelines for a safer burn:*

- Always follow the conditions of the fire permit when burning grass and stubble.
- Blade or plow down to mineral soil, at least five metres around your burn, to create a guard that keeps the fire from spreading.
- Break down larger fields to smaller sections for more manageable sized fires. Build fire guards around each section. Only set fires that can be controlled at all times by having sufficient manpower and equipment available.
- After completing the burn, continue to patrol the area until the fire is completely out.

Piles

Pile burning can be particularly tricky because it can result in deep ground fires that last long after the surface fire is out. *Here are some tips to safe, effective pile burning:*

- Burn when there is snow cover and frozen ground, whenever possible.
- Re-pile and re-burn, if necessary, until the pile is completely gone.
- Using a metal rod, probe the pile for hotspots. These hotspots can smoulder long after the fire appears to be out, and can come back to life in the spring.
- Check piles in March and April to make sure there are no smouldering embers and all potential fires have been extinguished. This is important because pile fires can burn under the snow all winter.



The following **Do's** and **Don't's** will help guide you towards a safe burn:

Do burn:

- in the early mid-morning or late afternoon
- when you have what you need to safely and effectively control the fire – adequate supervision, manpower, equipment and a nearby water supply
- from the outside perimeter, and against the wind
- with the authority of a burning permit, when allowed
- Once you have a tilled fire break

Do NOT burn:

- under extremely dry conditions, where there's been no precipitation for a long period of time
- at the end of the day (Embers can remain hot for days, even weeks, so ensure the weather is safe the next day and monitor your fire for at least a few days later to ensure it's out.)
- when the forecast calls for high temperatures, gusting winds or winds greater than 15 kilometres per hour
- when humidity is low or when there are thunderstorms in the area
- vegetation (fuels) that are more than 90 per cent cured (If you must, use extreme caution, because fuels this dry will cause high-intensity fires.)
- on an upward or downward slope
- where there is a lot of fuel/vegetation
- during a Burning Ban period (Contact your local municipality for more information.)

TIP:

An outdoor fire can quickly become a wildfire – never think it is “just a grass fire.”

TIP:

Short green grass may help slow down fast-moving grass fires.

