

## INFORMATION ON HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES

### TERMS

When declared by the Saturna Island Volunteer Fire Department, usually during an Extreme Fire Danger Rating:

“**EARLY SHIFT**” means high-risk activities must cease by 1 pm and be followed by a two-hour fire watch. During that time, non-high-risk activities can be completed while someone remains at the site and monitors for any sign of smoke. The fire watch requires at least one competent person to be on site with water and digging tools. They should also be able to contact 911 if necessary.

“**SHUTDOWN**” means all high-risk activities are banned until further notice. The only exceptions are specific situations where the Fire Chief has granted written permission due to the use of fire-safe techniques.

### FIRE WATCHER

A person who, in accordance with subsection (3) (a) and Schedule 3, is required to maintain a fire watcher, must ensure that the fire watcher:

- a) can reasonably see the site of the high-risk activity during the time the fire watcher is required,
- b) has at least one fire-fighting hand tool,
- c) actively watches and patrols for sparks and fires on the site of the high-risk activity,
- d) immediately carries out fire control and extinguishes the fire, if practicable, and
- e) has the means on site to report the fire (landline or cellular phone).

### HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES

According to the BC [Wildfire Regulation](#), these include:

- a) mechanical brushing;
- b) disk trenching;
- c) preparation or use of explosives (example: fireworks, blasting);
- d) using fire- or spark-producing tools, including cutting tools (example: grinders, cutting torches);
- e) using or preparing fireworks or pyrotechnics (example: fireworks, blasting);
- f) grinding, including rail grinding;
- g) mechanical land clearing (example: excavator, skidder);
- h) clearing and maintaining rights of way, including grass mowing (this is commercial right of way lawn mowing, **not** residential lawn mowing)
- i) any of the following activities carried out in a cutblock **excluding** a road, landing, roadside work area or log sort area in the cutblock:
  - o operating a power saw (unless on a landing);
  - o mechanical tree felling, woody debris piling or tree processing, including de-limbing;

- welding;
- portable wood chipping, milling, processing or manufacturing (unless on a landing);
- skidding logs or log forwarding unless it is improbable that the skidding or forwarding will result in the equipment contacting rock;
- 6- yarding logs using cable systems.

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Restricted High-Risk-Activity Days**

1. Can I mow my lawn?

**YES.** Residents can use their lawnmowers for cutting their lawns. If the lawn is green and requires cutting, and has been irrigated, it is fire resistant. If residents want to mow their lawn when it is dry and dead, we recommend holding off or using preventative measures such as pre-wetting and post-wetting the lawn and remaining on site after mowing to watch for smoldering fires. Have fire suppression available (garden hose) and a way to contact 911 if needed.

2. Can I weed-eat?

**YES.** Same principles as lawn mowing, but extra precautions should be discussed with the fire department if using metal disk blades.

3. Can I hay?

**YES.** However, during Shutdown, special fire prevention measures may be required. If not a critical job, we suggest holding off haying until the fire danger decreases. There are irrigated fields that are fairly safe to hay even in extreme conditions.

4. Is excavating a high-risk activity?

**NO.** As long as the excavation is being done on rock, dirt or mineral soil. Examples of excavating include construction sites, septic tank, driveway work, etc. Excavating doesn't include land clearing.

5. Can I use a chain saw?

**YES.** Chainsaw use is only permitted on non-combustible surfaces (e.g. green grass, gravel, dirt, roadway) during Shutdown.

6. Is drilling a high-risk activity?

**NO.** Contractors can drill in rock under no restrictions. Blasting is only permitted in Early Shift or Regular Shift. **No Blasting is permitted during Shutdown.**

Thanks to Saltspring Fire for preparing this information on high-risk activities. Go to [Saltspringfire.com](http://Saltspringfire.com) any time to review the restrictions. Please note that there is often a different Fire Danger Rating on Saltspring, and they may decide to impose Early Shift, Shutdown, etc. at different times.

Authority is granted to the Saturna fire chief to impose fire danger-related rules by CRD Bylaw 3452.

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