



Media release

Friday 7 February 2014

Safe Burning in Selwyn

Selwyn District Council is reminding residents of the importance of safe burning practices as weather conditions begin to dry out in the district.

“We are currently in an open fire season and conditions are not yet dry enough to introduce fire restrictions however conditions are worsening which does elevate the risk of fires spreading and potentially damaging property or endangering life if they are lit in unsuitable conditions,” says Selwyn Principal Rural Fire Officer Wilson Brown.

“We have been very fortunate so far that most people have been careful to follow guidance on how to burn safely and it would be great if people could continue to be cautious so that we are able to get through the summer in Selwyn without having any major fires to respond to.”

Council staff are monitoring the fire risk on a daily basis and fire restrictions will be introduced if required.

Mr Brown is also encouraging people to avoid lighting outdoor fires unless this is necessary.

“Many properties will still have tree debris lying around following the wind event last spring. If possible, we are asking people to avoid burning this debris now in high summer and wait until there is more moisture in the soil, which may happen in the autumn or winter.”

In rural areas an open fire season exists, meaning that fires are permitted but anyone lighting a fire should follow safe burning guidelines. If you are planning to light a fire:

- never do so in high winds or if high winds are forecast
- always have a water source and fire fighting tools on hand to put out the fire
- have an appropriate fire break in place for the type of fire, and
- stay with the fire at all times and dial 111 if it gets out of control

There are a number of other conditions which must be met which are listed online at www.selwyn.govt.nz/fire. Outdoor fires are not allowed in urban areas, other than gas barbeques, hangis and umus, and in high country and hill areas a permanent restricted fire season is in place.

As the fire risk can change quickly with weather conditions people should always check whether fire restrictions are in place by visiting www.selwyn.govt.nz/fire or phoning 03 347 2800 or 03 318 8338 before burning.

ENDS

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