

Dear Mayors, Wardens, and CAOs:

You are likely aware that we've taken another step in wildfire prevention earlier this week, by restricting travel and activities in the woods: <https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2025/08/05/travel-activities-woods-restricted-prevent-wildfires>

This is in addition to the provincewide burn ban that was put in place last week: <https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2025/07/30/provincewide-burn-ban-effect>

Additionally, as of August 6, 2025, the Office of the Fire Marshal has banned all Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Special Effects anytime a burn ban is in effect. The fine for violating the ban is \$25,000. The ban applies to all professional and personal fireworks even if they have the appropriate approvals.

Based on the above we are requesting that municipalities stop issuing permits related to fireworks and pyrotechnic special effects and rescind any permits or approvals that have already been issued. We are also requesting municipalities post this information on their publicly available websites and in conspicuous places across their municipalities. A copy of the Fireworks Restriction Advisory can be found at:

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/1-4050/office-fire-marshal-fireworks-advisory-en.pdf>

News release: <https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2025/08/06/fireworks-banned-provincewide>

These are temporary measures to help avoid wildfires during this period of exceptionally hot, dry weather. We understand that many of these restrictions will lead to questions for municipalities from their residents and we want to provide some guidance.

Our overall message is “*stay out of the woods*,” “*no open fires anywhere*,” and “*no use of fireworks*.” Nobody wants a repeat of the devastation parts of our province experienced in 2023. We are asking all Nova Scotians to co-operate and be sensible in applying these rules to help keep our people and our communities safe. Don't look for loopholes. If you're not sure, just don't do it – that is the safest approach.

Many parks and trails are within municipal jurisdiction. Here are some factors to consider when managing your parks and trails:

- Parks and trails that are heavily wooded or tree-lined should be considered off limits.
- It is ok to use a short trail to get from Point A to Point B – such as going from the parking lot to a beach. However, people should not be heading out to spend time in the woods.
- If a park has an open area that you can quickly access from the entrance or parking lot, that is fine. But any other parts of the park that are wooded are off limits.
- Coastal hiking trails that do not require going through the woods for any great distance are fine. Wooded/tree-lined trails are off limits.
- Camping is not allowed in the woods – unless it is at a campground, such as a campground business or provincial park. No campfires are allowed.

- Camping in an open field is ok, as long as you do not need to travel any great distance through woods to get there. No campfires are allowed.

We know some municipalities will have questions about individuals and families experiencing homelessness and surviving in tents, shelters or vehicles in the woods, and their increased risk from wildfire than most Nova Scotians.

Staff at Opportunities and Social Development are working with partners to identify encampments that may be in wooded areas and will work with Natural Resources staff to determine whether they are considered off limits under the restrictions.

If any are off limits, staff at Opportunities and Social Development will work with municipalities, local service providers, and our conservations officers to relocate people while the restrictions are in place.

We understand this will be a challenging time for municipalities and your residents, businesses and organizations. We thank you for your efforts to help prevent wildfires and keep our communities safe.

If you have a question, please contact your local Department of Natural of Resources office:
https://novascotia.ca/natr/staffdir/offices_map.asp