



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE

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The weekend's rain has eased the fire danger in Southland so the District's fire ban has been lifted today.

Southern Rural Fire District Principal Rural Fire Officer Mike Grant said a restricted fire season has been imposed across the province, which means a permit has to be gained to light an open fire. The total fire ban is still in place in the Naseby area.

During a restricted season, permits do not need to be gained for camp fires, barbecues, incinerators, offal holes and hedge trimmings, but these do have specific conditions, including never lighting them when it is windy and not being within 30m of a building, trees, hedges or material that could catch fire.

Those who light fires in the open are responsible for making sure the fires are safe and do not spread, Mr Grant said.

"Even if you light a fire with a permit, or in an incinerator or a barbecue, it's still your responsibility if it escapes and damages property or has to be put out by the fire service or rural fire crew," he said.

Fires should never be lit when conditions are windy, or strong winds are forecast.

The Southern Rural Fire District staff issue permits, but it can take up to five days to check the applications, particularly if a site inspection is required, so Mr Grant urges people to think ahead if they plan to burn off.

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