



Dear Open Burning Operator,

**Re: Custom Venting Forecasting Services Continue for 2007 / 08**

This letter is to inform you of the continuation of the Ministry of Environment's Custom Venting Forecasting service for the 2007/08 fall burning season. The purpose of this service is to help operators meet the venting requirements for burning in accordance with the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation (*OBSCR*) and locally developed forest district Smoke Management Plans.

The Ministry's experience with in-house custom venting forecasting dates back to October 2003 and since then this service has grown considerably. Last year, for example, our forecaster issued over 700 forecasts over the course of the burn season, at times up to 18 forecasts per day.

Results to date demonstrate that this service does, while protecting human health through the reduction of air quality impacts from open burning, offer increased opportunity and flexibility to operators because:

- they are tailored to the individual pile's geographic location and elevation
- issued by 5:00 pm the day prior to when they are valid and
- they are valid for three days

There is a procedure to follow to get things under way so that we can provide this service to you in a timely and efficient matter. To properly meet your needs our forecaster will need to have your:

- Burn Registration Number,
- lot location (latitude / longitude, UTM coordinates or lot number),
- approximate elevation and
- number and size of piles.

The Ministry's forecaster, Uwe (pronounced 'oova') Gramann will notify you when the venting is sufficient to open burn at your location. Forecasts will be issued no later than 5:00 PM the evening before the day is valid and extends for the following three days. Should you not have email access we can call you with a forecast or fax it to a specified number.

This service is available Sunday through Friday during the Fall Burning Season and Monday through Friday during all other times of the year. It is in addition to options already in place, including:

- Environment Canada's Public Venting Forecasts for Burns Lake, Smithers Terrace and Stewart (1-888-281-2992)
- Test Burn (as per outlined in the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation only, for locations where there is no publicly available venting index).

Using the custom venting forecast service does not in any way limit your ability to use these other options. If at any time the custom forecast service is not available, please use whichever other option is most appropriate.

The cost of this service is variable but there is a minimum charge of \$300.00 per season. If you are a licensee and have an Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) greater than 200,000m<sup>3</sup> then the fee is AAC x 0.0015\$.

If you are a BCTS licensee then your local BCTS business area may have paid for this service on your behalf.

**Please note that you must always call 1-888-281-2992 before igniting piles or adding debris, to determine whether the Environmental Protection Director (as defined in the *Environmental Management Act*) has issued any burn restrictions under the OBSCR. Alternatively you can be added to an email notification list to be informed of any burn restrictions.**

Use of the custom venting service does not in any way relieve you, the burn operator, from your duty to meet the requirements of the OBSCR. Due diligence in preventing pollution should always be practiced. For more information refer to your local Forest District's Smoke Management Plan or contact me (at the details below).

The Ministry of Environment, Skeena Region believes that site specific venting forecasts are a significant improvement in protecting against pollution while opening up more days for resource management and land clearing debris burns. This is especially true in the Skeena Region where, because of complex topography and meteorology, the venting forecasts Environment Canada issues for Burns Lake, Smithers, Terrace and Stewart do not always apply to locations outside those communities.

Please do not hesitate to take advantage of this service. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Weinstein', is written over a light blue rectangular stamp.

Ben Weinstein

**Benjamin Weinstein, BSc.**

**Air Quality Meteorologist**

**Ministry of Environment**

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