

Burning Fires and Air Quality

A general guide

**Tasman Resource Management Plan
(the “TRMP”)**

Summary Guide No. 13

Current: December 2020

Burning fires can be a cost-effective method for keeping our homes warm and to dispose of vegetation and garden waste from residential, lifestyle block and horticultural properties. However, the associated smoke and odour can have adverse health and nuisance effects on people, property and the environment.

The Tasman District Council has air quality rules to minimise the adverse effects of smoke, smell and particulates through the TRMP.

Why do we need burning rules?

Burning causes particulate matter and chemicals to be released into the air and create pollution. The material being burnt, the temperature of the fire, the available oxygen to it, and the weather, all influence the amount of pollution of the air.

Late autumn and winter are particularly bad times for air pollution in our district. During these seasons the calm, clear and cold days don't allow smoke to rise and disperse. Instead, the smoke sits low to the ground under an inversion layer. The effects of poor air quality include:

Health effects:

- Headache and anxiety
- Irritation of eyes, nose and throat
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Impacts on the respiratory system, liver, spleen and blood, and the reproductive system



Smoke hazards and nuisances for the community:

- Reduced visibility is a traffic hazard if smoke is blown towards roads
- Smoke and odour make the air unpleasant and unhealthy to breathe
- Particulates, including ash, are a nuisance by landing on houses, cars, washing, and play areas
- Particulates can contaminate garden soil, fruit and vegetables, and drinking water collected from roofs

Home Heating Burner Rules

The TRMP has rules that apply to the use of small-scale solid fuel-burning appliances (burners) for home heating. This includes open fires, pot bellies and domestic ranges or stoves, wood burners, pellet fires, multi-fuel (coal/wood and waste burning system) or any other similar appliances.

The Ministry for the Environment has information on the different types of approved clean burning appliances. If in doubt, ask Council.

Richmond Airshed

The TRMP has specific rules that apply to burners in Richmond as they contribute significant air pollution to the airshed during winter. Check the TRMP planning maps to find out if your property is within the airshed at: www.tasman.govt.nz/link/trmp.

The TRMP rules prevent installation of wood burners unless it is a replacement of an existing burner with a new clean-burning appliance. Wood burners may require upgrading to clean-burning appliances when a house changes ownership.

Houses that do not have an existing wood burner or newly built houses within the Richmond airshed can only install pellet fires, or use alternatives such as heat pumps and electric heaters.

New Burners in the Rest of the District

There are also TRMP rules which apply to new burners in all areas outside of the Richmond airshed. If you live in an urban area or on a site less than 2 hectares in size, you will be required to install a clean-burning appliance to reduce air pollution. New open fireplaces are not permitted in urban areas.



burn vegetation on large properties (over 5000m²) subject to a resource consent. If in doubt, ask Council.

Good Practice Guide: Home Heating

For best practice burning tips, see our guide 'Let's Clear the Air' available at Council offices or on our website.

Outdoor Burning Rules

The TRMP identifies Fire Ban Areas and Fire Sensitive Areas in our district. Check the TRMP planning maps to find out whether or not you are in a one of these areas at:

www.tasman.govt.nz/link/trmp.

Fire Ban Areas: Richmond and Motueka, and the foreshore of the coastal marine area

What outdoor fires CAN I light?

- Fireworks
- Small fires used for food cooking purposes such as barbecues, hangis, and small camp fires that are no bigger than 1m² at the base
- Candles, lamps or similar small-scale burners or tools
- Outdoor fireplaces, including braziers or fires for ahi ka purposes
- Celebratory fires in Open Space Zone or Recreation Zone
- Any forge or kiln

You must use good burning practices to minimise smoke and odours at all times.

What outdoor fires CAN'T I light?

All other outdoor burning in the Fire Ban Areas is generally prohibited all year round, including the use of drum incinerators and the burning of vegetation including garden waste. However, between October to April (inclusive), in some circumstances, you can

Fire Sensitive Areas: the outskirts of Richmond and Motueka, and the urban areas of all other towns and local centres

What outdoor fires CAN I light?

- Between September to May (inclusive) you can burn outdoors as long as you comply with the rules in the TRMP (Chapter 36.3) and use good burning practices.
- Between June and August (inclusive) you can only burn diseased horticultural waste for biosecurity purposes, or use a forge or kiln.
- You must use good burning practices to minimise smoke and odours at all times.

What outdoor fires CAN'T I light?

Between June and August (inclusive) all other outdoor burning in Fire Sensitive Areas is generally prohibited. However, you can burn non-diseased horticultural waste during this time subject to a resource consent. If in doubt, ask Council.

All Other Areas

You can burn outdoors in all other areas of the district as long as you comply with the rules in the TRMP (Chapter 36.3) and use good burning practices. Even where outdoor burning is permitted, you must not cause odour, smoke or ash deposits that are offensive or objectionable over your property boundary.

So if I can't burn it, what should I do?

Vegetation and garden waste can be composted, mulched or taken to your local greenwaste transfer station. Larger amounts of vegetation can be stock piled and left to dry, ready

for burning outside of the restricted periods (where it is allowed). The best way to dispose of other waste materials is to recycle it or take it to your local transfer station.

Good Practice Guide: Outdoor Burning

For best practice burning tips, see our guide 'Outdoor Burning' available at Council offices or on our website.



Fire Permits for Outdoor Burning

Fire restrictions are initiated by Fire and Emergency New Zealand for public safety reasons, and may be in force at any time of the year in the Tasman district. You may be required to obtain a fire permit from Fire and Emergency New Zealand before lighting fires in the open air. This is in addition to any resource consent or permitted activity conditions under the TRMP, and applies even if you are not in a Fire Ban or Fire Sensitive Area.

To check the current fire season and apply for a permit (if necessary), go to www.checkitsalright.nz or contact Fire and Emergency New Zealand on 03 544 2441.

Do Not Burn Prohibited Materials!

- Treated timber, or particle or fibre board
- Rubber products including tyres
- Batteries
- Bitumen-containing materials
- Used oil or waste oil
- Materials associated with the recovery of metals from insulated electrical cables
- Materials and metals that are components of motor vehicles, or mechanical or electrical equipment
- Asbestos or radioactive material
- Domestic or industrial rubbish
- Plastic or plastic products

The best way to dispose of these materials is to recycle it or take it to your local transfer station. Plastic agricultural containers can be taken to your nearest AgRecovery Centre (www.agrecovery.co.nz). Balewrap and silage sheeting can be recycled through Plasback (www.plasback.co.nz).

Where there's Smoke, there's Trouble

If a fire is causing a nuisance, the complainant should talk to the person responsible and seek cooperation in reaching an acceptable solution. If there is no relief, the complainant can contact the Council's compliance team. Council staff may visit the property and assess whether the burning complies with the TRMP rules. If it is found that there is a breach, the person responsible for the fire will be subject to enforcement action such as an infringement fine or an abatement notice.

Remember: If the good practice guides on outdoor burning and home heating are followed, then infringing the rules is less likely.

This guide is a summary of TRMP provisions only. Please see the TRMP for full details or seek advice from Council staff. If in doubt, ask Council.

Tasman District Council Email info@tasman.govt.nz Website www.tasman.govt.nz 24 hour assistance

Richmond	189 Queen Street, Private Bag 4, Richmond, Nelson 7050, New Zealand	Phone 03 543 8400	Fax 03 543 9524
Murchison	92 Fairfax Street, Murchison 7007, New Zealand	Phone 03 523 1013	Fax 03 523 1012
Motueka	7 Hickmott Place, PO Box 123, Motueka 7143, New Zealand	Phone 03 528 2022	Fax 03 528 9751
Golden Bay	78 Commercial Street, PO Box 74, Takaka 7142, New Zealand	Phone 03 525 0020	Fax 03 525 9972

