

# Appendix AQ8

## guide to outdoor burning (rural)

**AQ8.1 NOTE** that a fire permit is also required for all fires in rural areas (contact the Waimea rural fire authority)

### AQ8.2 Burning of vegetation, cardboard, paper and untreated wood

- a) **Burn dry seasoned material**
- i) Except stumps and standing dead vegetation (see AQ8.3 Vegetation and stump burn offs), vegetation should be allowed to dry for at least four weeks in summer and six weeks in winter prior to burning.
  - ii) Stumps must be cleaned of excessive soil and left to dry for at least 6 months.
  - iii) Heap stumps to provide good airflow.
- b) **Locate the fire sensitively**
- i) The fire should be at least 50 metres from a formed public road.
  - ii) Try to locate the fire at least 50 metres upwind from any house on a neighbouring property, or any sensitive activity. However, depending on wind direction and size of property, large setbacks will be appropriate. In some situations it may be preferable to have the fire sited close to the upwind boundary.
- c) **Monitor weather conditions**
- i) Check forecast wind strength and direction during the intended day of burning.
  - ii) Don't light fires in wind speeds greater than about 15 kph (leaves and the smallest twigs move in the wind). The ash produced on the fire is more likely to be blown about if winds are stronger than this, and the discharges will travel further in high wind conditions.
  - iii) Don't burn in calm, highly stable conditions (which encourage the development of temperature inversions). They commonly occur in winter. In these situations the smoke will hang about and not rise.
  - iv) Burn after 10am and before 3pm in winter and only place on fuel that will be completely burnt by 5pm.
  - v) In summer burn in coolest part of day, and not in windy conditions.
  - vi) Don't burn when wind will blow smoke toward neighbouring houses. You may not always be able to avoid smoke going towards a neighbouring house (see (b) above). It is important to discuss your plans for burning with your neighbour to help reduce potential conflicts.
  - vii) In some situations a good wind can be useful for dispersing smoke.
  - viii) Don't burn if wet weather is likely to cause smoke problems because of damp material.
- d) **Stack the material carefully**
- i) Vegetation and wood should be stacked loosely, not compacted.
  - ii) Minimise the size of the fire. Avoid burning more than 2 cubic metres at a time.

- e) **Manage the fire well**
- i) A small fire should be started with the driest material and fed gradually with further material once the fire is “blazing”.
  - ii) Do not allow a fire to smolder.
  - iii) Feed new material onto the top.
  - iv) The fire should not be left unattended once started.
  - v) Small quantities of paper, kindling, kerosene or diesel may be used as accelerants.
- f) **Prohibited materials**
- i) Burning used or waste oil, materials associated with the recovery of metals from insulated electrical cables, any radioactive materials, or materials with radioactive components, materials and metals that are components of motor vehicles or mechanical or electrical equipment, treated timber or fibreboard, any plastic or plastic products (except plastics containing only polyethylene – marked with No. 2 recycling arrow), rubber products including tyres, bitumen-containing materials, batteries, or asbestos product are prohibited from being burnt under the Council’s rules (see Rule AQr.20). Burning of polyethylene agricultural wrap or High Density polyethylene agricultural chemical containers requires a resource consent (see Aqr.55).

### **AQ8.3 Vegetation and stump burn offs**

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- a) Obtain a weather forecast. Regard should be had to the forecast wind strength and direction during the intended day of burning. Burning should not occur when either very strong winds are predicted, or calm, highly stable conditions are predicted to occur in winter where a temperature inversion may develop.
- b) Plan your fire carefully. Consider light up patterns, fire breaks, wind speed and direction, fire fighting resources that may be required, supervision, insurance cover, notification of the fire service or fire authority, and neighbours. Seek advice from your Rural Fire Authority.

### **AQ8.4 Advisory notes**

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- a) Burning resulting in the dispersal or deposition of particles that causes an objectionable or offensive effect or an unreasonable nuisance beyond the boundary of the property where the discharge originates, may be subject to enforcement action. However, following the steps above should help prevent such adverse effects. In deciding on whether enforcement action will be taken, Nelson City Council staff will be guided by the “Protocol for Assessing Offensive or Objectionable Dispersal or Deposition of Smoke Particles” in Appendix AQ9.
- b) Alternatives such as composting, mulching or chipping should be considered before proceeding with outdoor burning. Commercial mulching equipment may be available for large volumes of greenwaste material, including gorse. Using an alternative method may be the only way to avoid creating adverse smoke effects in some circumstances.