



Wildfire Interface Development Permits

The intent of this brochure is to assist in preparing a Wildfire Interface Development Permit (DP) application.

Purpose of Wildfire Interface Development Permits

The Wildfire Interface DP Area is designated for the purpose of protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity and for the protection of development from hazardous conditions.

The Okanagan has a naturally dry climate and a large community interface with forested areas. The risk that wildfire poses to urban development can be managed through policies and mitigation efforts. Choosing the proper building material for your home, reducing fuel accumulation (eg., branches and leaves), and using appropriate landscaping material can help to reduce the risk of wildfire impacting your home and community.

Where are Wildfire DP Areas Located?

Wildfire DP Areas are designated in the RDCO [Official Community Plans \(OCP\)](#) or in the [Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw \(RLUB\)](#). You can determine if your property is located within a DP Area by using the RDCO Mapping resource, DP Area website, or by contacting the RDCO Planning Services Department:



(250) 469-6227



planning@rdco.com



Mapping:
<https://gis-rdco.hub.arcgis.com/>

DP Areas:

<https://www.rdco.com/en/business-and-land-use/development-permit-areas.aspx>

Objectives

The objectives of Wildfire Interface designated areas include:

- To reduce the susceptibility to wildfire of new construction or large additions;
- To address wildfire risk

reduction at time of subdivision; and

- To ensure important ecosystem values are addressed in wildfire mitigation recommendations and activities.

Guidelines

The RDCO guidelines for Wildfire DP Areas are based on the FireSmart Manual developed by Partners in Protection and adopted by the BC Wildfire Management Branch as well as the RDCO's Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Please review the specific guidelines in the RDCO OCPs or Joe Rich RLUB that include requirements for roofing, exterior walls, chimneys, eaves, vents, windows, balconies, decks, and landscaping.

Exemptions

There are several exemptions where a Wildfire DP is not required. Please see the Exemptions section in the Wildfire DP Area Guidelines of the RDCO [Official Community Plans \(OCP\)](#) or [Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw \(RLUB\)](#).

Wildfire Covenants

Construction within a Wildfire DP Area typically requires a wildfire covenant prior to receiving a final building inspection. A wildfire covenant can be obtained by a notary public or lawyer. Pick up a blank Wildfire Covenant form at the Regional District Office from the Planning Section, or find the form online at

<https://www.rdco.com/en/business-and-land-use/planning-applications.aspx#Wildfire-development-permitcovenant>

If your property already has a wildfire covenant, you can obtain a copy from the BC Land Title & Survey office website: <https://ltsa.ca/>

Professional Reports

Depending on the location and type of proposed development, professional reports may be required before a development permit can be issued. All professional reports submitted with a DP application must comply with the RDCO [Terms of Reference for Professional Reports](#).

Bonding

When landscaping and/or remedial work is a condition of the DP, the owner or agent shall provide a security deposit in the amount of 125% of the estimated cost of the prescribed works (including monitoring), prior to issuance of the DP. The amount shall be determined by the qualified professional preparing technical reports for the application.

Public Input

The Regional District has three (3) advisory groups, which provide comments on various applications. These comments are considered when making a decision by the Regional Board. Members of an advisory group are appointed by the Regional Board based on their background of civic activity, interest, or expertise.

Applications may be referred to one or more of the following advisory groups:

- Advisory Planning Commission (APC)
- Agricultural Advisory Commission (AAC)
- Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC)

How Long does the Application Process Take?

DP applications typically take 3 months to proceed through the evaluation and approval process.

Please note, additional information may be requested during the process, which may increase the application processing time. An applicant can considerably reduce any delays by supplying prompt replies with complete information. If Regional Board Review is required for the application, the process typically takes 6 months.

The DP Process

Discuss the Proposal with Staff

Staff can provide application forms and information.

Preliminary Design Discussion

Discuss initial ideas and drawings with staff in order to better understand the requirements and expectations

Application Reviewed

Staff, relevant agencies, and public advisory commission(s) are asked to provide comments on the proposal. Staff then prepares a report to the Regional Board or Director of Community Services for their consideration.

Consideration of the DP Application by Either the Regional Board or Director of Community Services

- Approve the DP
- Not approve the DP
- Defer a decision pending more information or clarification

If Approved, the DP is Officially Granted

- The DP will contain certain requirements and specifications that the development must meet. The applicant is notified, and the Regional District registers the DP on the title of the affected property
- If applicable, the applicant can now proceed to the Building Permit application process