

# The Manitoba Controlled Crop Residue Burning Program

**It is the farmer's responsibility to ensure that burning is conducted legally and safely, and that the smoke does not cause problems.**

Smoke from burning crop residues affects people's health, road safety and the environment. The Burning of Crop Residue and Non-Crop Herbage Regulation deals with the legal aspects of crop residue burning. Crop residue is the straw, stubble, or chaff from any crop, including baled or stacked crop material, and the remains of any unharvested crop.

## The Regulation

- Prohibits nighttime burning of crop residue year-round
- Restricts daytime burning between August 1 and November 15 to conditions laid out in daily burn authorizations
- Allows daytime burning between November 16 and July 31, from sunrise to sunset



## Before You Burn Call: 1-800-265-1233

Or check for daily authorizations online at: [manitoba.ca/agriculture](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture)

If you must burn, find out whether burning is authorized in your area. Authorizations are issued by 11:00 a.m. daily. Even if burning is authorized, be sure that the winds will not cause smoke to travel towards roadways, towns or neighbouring residents. You must ensure that smoke will not create an unreasonable health or safety hazard. A fireguard must be in place to prevent the fire from spreading and fires must be supervised at all times.

## How is a burn day decided?

The intent of the regulation is to control the smoke from crop residue burning. A good day for burning may not be a good day for smoke dispersion. Smoke disperses when it mixes with clean air. Generally, the greatest amount of clean air is available during the warmest part of the day and during periods of unstable weather (rainy or windy conditions). Factors considered in deciding the duration for authorizing crop residue burning include the air temperature, surface and transport winds, atmospheric mixing height and ventilation rate.

## Why is nighttime burning illegal?

Temperature changes after sunset usually limit smoke dispersion. At night, smoke tends to linger close to the ground, where it can cause health and safety concerns, rather than mixing with clean air higher up in the atmosphere.

## Exemptions to the Regulation

The regulation allows small accumulations of straw to be burned outside of authorized periods if the straw is immediately impeding field operations such as seeding or tillage. These straw accumulations may result from wind, rain, water (floats), a broken bale, a windrow less than 100 feet in length, or from stopping equipment. No more than three fires, with a combined area of one acre, can be burning at one time. Non-crop vegetation in ditches and yards, and residue from forage crops grown for seed may be burned any day between sunrise and sunset. Always check local regulations and bylaws before burning.

## Burning Permits

For the Rural Municipalities of Rosser, Headingley, St. Francois Xavier, Cartier, MacDonald, Ritchot, Taché, Springfield, East St. Paul and West St. Paul, a burning permit is required from August 1 to November 15 at all times.

In other parts of the province, a permit is not required when burning is authorized. Daily authorizations are available at [Manitoba.ca/agriculture](http://Manitoba.ca/agriculture) and 1-800-265-1233 by 11:00 am. Under certain circumstances, such as when specific safety or air quality concerns exist, burning may not be authorized except by permit. On these days, a burning permit is required before burning can occur..

A burning permit sets out a number of terms and conditions that must be followed. For example, a particular wind direction may be required to avoid creating smoke hazards on a nearby roadway. Permits will not be issued merely for convenience reasons. Even with a permit, farmers must ensure they burn crop residues safely and may be charged if unsafely or for having fires that cause smoke problems.

## How to Apply for a Permit

Permit applications are available at [www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/crop-residue-burning-program/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/crop-residue-burning-program/index.html) or at any Growing Opportunities (GO) Office.

Completed applications can be submitted Monday to Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 pm, excluding holidays by:

1. Email at [CropResidueBurning@gov.mb.ca](mailto:CropResidueBurning@gov.mb.ca)
2. Drop off at any GO Office
3. Mail to Manitoba Agriculture, PO Box 1286, Minnedosa, MB, R0J 1E0
4. Fax to 204-867-6578

Once an application is reviewed, applicants will be notified if a permit will be issued or not that day. Permits are issued on a first come first serve basis and may be issued for one day or for several days. If a permit expires prior to burning being completed, a new permit is required. Phone messages can be left at 204-745-5646.

Weekend hours will vary and will be announced on 1-800-265-1233 and on 204-745-5646.

On some weekends, on line applications will be received at [CropResidueBurning@gov.mb.ca](mailto:CropResidueBurning@gov.mb.ca) until 1:00 pm. Phone messages received after 1:00 PM will be returned the next business day. On some weekends, applications will not be accepted and phone messages will only be returned the next business day.

## Other Jurisdictions

Some cities, towns and municipalities have their own burning bylaws, which will prohibit open air burning or require additional permits.

To learn about Burning Restrictions in effect, call your Rural Municipality. You can also select a Rural Municipality (RM) using the map at [www.gov.mb.ca/wildfire/burn\\_conditions.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/wildfire/burn_conditions.html)

Burning within the boundaries of the City of Winnipeg requires a special permit. Permits must be applied for in

person at the Fire Department-Fire Prevention Branch, located at 2nd Floor, 185 King St. between the hours of 8:30AM and 4:00PM. [http://winnipeg.ca/fps/FirePrevention/Regulations/Open-Air\\_Fires.stm](http://winnipeg.ca/fps/FirePrevention/Regulations/Open-Air_Fires.stm) or call 311 for more information.

A permit from Manitoba Sustainable Development is required for burning within burning permit areas. Be sure to check whether permits are required in your area.

For further information on Wildfires and current restrictions refer to: [www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/fire/Restrictions/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/fire/Restrictions/index.html)

## Enforcement

Charges may result for burning crop residue:

- outside of authorized hours
- in areas that are not authorized
- at night
- in an unsafe manner that adversely affects roadways or public health
- without proper supervision or adequate fireguards

Manitoba Sustainable Development environment officers, RCMP and municipal police enforce the regulation.

Infractions are normally dealt with under The Summary Convictions Act. Conviction carries a fine in excess of \$2,000. Charges for repeat or more serious offences may be laid under The Environment Act, which carries fines up to \$50,000. If an illegal or unsafe fire cannot be extinguished, the fire department may be dispatched at the offender's expense.

## For More Information:

Visit [manitoba.ca/agriculture](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture) or call Manitoba Agriculture at 204-745-5646.

## Report Illegal Burning

Contact the environment officer at the local Manitoba Sustainable Development office. The after-hours emergency line is: 204-944-4888.

Or call your local RCMP office. RCMP will normally respond if smoke is affecting highway safety.

## Check Daily Burning Authorizations

**Call: 1-800-265-1233**

**or visit: [manitoba.ca/agriculture](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture)**