Niagara-on-the-Lake Not Included in Ontario Fire Restriction Zone

For Immediate Release

April 3, 2020

Niagara-on-the-Lake - On April 3, 2020, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry (MNRF) placed a fire ban within all northern communities. Niagara-on-the-Lake is not included in that zone and, therefore, is not required to abide by the ban.

An open air burn (OAB) ban is not recommended at this point as we tend to see significant increases in call volumes during an OAB ban due to residents looking for enforcement. This rise in enforcement requirements places increased demand on volunteer firefighters, increasing their risk to potential exposure to COVID-19 strictly based on the probability of contact with others. Furthermore, the agricultural community is also under tremendous pressure due to the accumulating effects of COVID-19. A burn ban would place additional pressure on the agriculture community at a time where we are striving to support the community.

“I appreciate the need for the MNRF to enact these restrictions for their specific zones,” stated Fire Chief Ruller. “An OAB ban in Niagara-on-the-Lake could compromise the health of staff due to potential increases in call volume. We prefer to address specific issues as they arise through the complaint process outlined below.”

Niagara-on-the-Lake permits open air agricultural burns. These are not permitted within the urban boundary unless a resident receives written approval. Recreational fires are not permitted in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Starting January 1, 2020, the Town began accepting OAB requests and granting permissions through a new online format. Agricultural property owners are encouraged to visit this site, review a copy of the guidelines and complete the fillable form requesting permission.

If a specific OAB is interfering with a resident’s enjoyment of their property, they are to contact the Fire Department at 905-468-3266 during business hours. Outside of these hours, complaints should be made through 911. If an OAB presents a safety concern, please dial 911 and request that the fire department attend.

For more information, please contact:
Nick Ruller, Fire Chief
905-468-3266