

AGRICULTURAL CROP RESIDUE BURNING CODE OF PRACTICE COMPULSORY REQUIREMENTS

Fire and Emergency New Zealand have approved Agricultural Crop Residue Burning as an approved fire type in the **Ashburton** and **Selwyn** areas. This means that no permit is required for an agricultural crop residue burn in a restricted fire season provided there is **TOTAL** compliance with the requirements listed below.

1. No person shall light an agricultural crop residue burn unless they have ascertained the current fire season status. You can do this by visiting www.checkitsalright.nz. Ignorance of the fire season status will not be a defence against liability for any consequences that arise from an illegally lit fire.
2. Agricultural Crop Residue Burning shall only be carried out during daylight hours.
3. A minimum of two adults must be present during the burn and are to remain in attendance until the fire is completely out. Re-ignition of an agricultural crop residue burn can occur after a wind change, always check the fire ground after violent wind changes.
4. No agricultural crop residue burn shall be lit until a completely non-combustible continuous fire break of no less than 5 metres width is established around the area to be burned. Ensure it remains clean and clear of all combustible material.
5. No fires shall be lit in times of strong, gusty, unsettled wind or when the wind strength is greater than 15 kph (leaves and small twigs in motion, wind extends small flags). Weather forecasts are available from the MetService infoline 0900 999 25 (plains) or 0900 999 26 (High Country).
6. Where smoke from an agricultural crop residue burn obstructs visibility on a public highway the person responsible can be legally liable for any traffic accidents. If an agricultural crop residue burn is undertaken adjacent to any public highway an appropriate traffic management plan must be in place.
7. Fires adjacent to forestry blocks or riverbeds are only lit when wind direction is travelling away from those areas.
8. There must be a portable water supply of no less than 500 litres, with a pump and at least a 20 metre length of hose of a minimum 18 mm diameter on hand at all times, and other appropriate firefighting equipment (hand tools, tractor, fire extinguishers).
9. All persons undertaking the agricultural crop residue burn will carry cell phones and/or 2-way radios to enable communication at all times.
10. Immediately following the burn, the firebreak and adjacent burnt area of windrow is to be cultivated to minimise the risk of re-ignition.

AGRICULTURAL CROP RESIDUE BURNING RECOMMENDED GOOD PRACTICE

11. Good practice for non-combustible fire break preparation is to closely mow the stubble and rake off all the combustible material prior to cultivation to leave only bare mineral earth.
12. A single pass of a tyned cultivator is **not** considered adequate fire break protection.
13. The safe practice of burnout from an established fire break is considered a good fire management strategy and should be encouraged at all times. It should commence at the downward end of the paddock and then proceed up the flanks until an adequate safe strip is created.
14. Ensure all personnel are properly dressed for the job with appropriate work boots, are clothed wrist to ankle in fire resistant clothing (wool or cotton, long sleeves and legs with no nylon, polypropylene or fleece) and some form of head and hand protection.
15. Formulate and brief all those participating in the agricultural crop residue burn with the burn plan, which details safe areas and escape plans in the event of a fire escaping.
16. Inform neighbours of the date/time of the agricultural crop residue burn.
17. Federated Farmers undertakes to inform and encourage farmers to adopt good Agricultural Crop Residue Burning practices within the guidelines laid down by Fire and Emergency New Zealand.
18. Fire and Emergency New Zealand has the legal mandate for fire as a land management tool. Farmers have a responsibility for good fire management and decisions must be made with the best interests of the community in mind.

Rob Hands



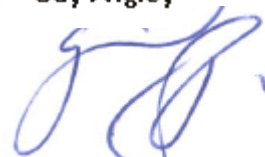
Principal Rural Fire Officer
Mid South Canterbury Rural
Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Darrin Woods



Principal Rural Fire Officer
Christchurch/Selwyn Rural
Fire Emergency New Zealand

Guy Wigley



Board Spokesperson Fire
Arable Industry Group
Federated Farmers

AGRICULTURAL CROP RESIDUE BURNING INFORMATION

Rules for Agricultural Crop Residue Burning 2017/18

Prior to the establishment of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Agricultural Crop Residue Burning rules varied across Canterbury and were dependent on the views of the respective Rural Fire Authorities. Ultimately under Fire and Emergency New Zealand a standardised system for fire permitting in a restricted fire season will be implemented. An online permitting system is in development but will not be in place for the 2017/18 fire season.

The online process will manage fire permitting in restricted fire seasons and it will be necessary to obtain a permit for any fire into open air. The only exception to this are fires that Fire and Emergency New Zealand determine as “approved fire types”. Anyone lighting an approved fire type will need to be fully compliant with a standard set of conditions relating to that fire type. For anyone undertaking an agricultural crop residue burn in the Selwyn or Ashburton Districts that means no permit is required in a restricted fire season provided there is **TOTAL** compliance with the Crop Residue Code of Practice.

Fire Seasons

Fire and Emergency New Zealand can implement measures to control the lighting of fires in open air as fire danger levels rise at any time during the year.

During an **“Open Fire Season”** it is not necessary to obtain a fire permit before burning. However, there is the expectation that any open air burning is conducted in a safe manner and the person responsible for the fire remains liable for any damage that an escaped fire may cause to property.

During a **“Restricted Fire Season”** it is necessary to obtain a permit from Fire and Emergency New Zealand for any fire in the open air. The only exception is where a fire type is designated by Fire and Emergency New Zealand as an “approved fire type”. Agricultural Crop Residue Burning falls into this category within the Selwyn and Ashburton areas.

During a **“Prohibited Fire Season”** no fires are allowed to be lit.

Public Notification of Fire Season Status

- The Check It’s Alright webpage (www.checkitalright.nz) will have comprehensive information on the current fire season status and conditions relating to lighting fires.
- During the fire season when Restrictions or Prohibitions are declared notices will be published as required which set out the dates and provisions of the fire control measures.
- Fire Danger Indicator Boards placed alongside major roads will keep the public informed of the fire season status.



Liability

- The person lighting the fire is responsible for any damage that any fire escape from the controlled burn might cause to another person's property.
- Regardless of the fire season status there is still a responsibility on the person lighting any fire to ensure the burn is conducted in a safe manner and that any discharge from the activity does not cause nuisance to neighbours or is a hazard to traffic.
- Where indiscretions have occurred Fire and Emergency New Zealand will first take the approach of educating, but there is provision in the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act (2017) for the use of instant infringement notices or further action through the court system.
- Anyone carrying out an agricultural crop residue burn should ensure they have public liability insurance in place.

Contacting Fire and Emergency New Zealand

The www.checkitsalright.nz website has been established as the one stop shop for burning information with links on the website back to local Fire and Emergency New Zealand offices who can provide specific advice and information. The site is also the conduit for anyone wanting to apply for a fire permit or check the current fire season status.

For further advice on Agricultural Crop Residue Burning or training on safe burning practices please contact Fire Emergency New Zealand Mid-South Canterbury Fire District 03 684 1200 or Christchurch Selwyn District 03 372 8648.

Environment Canterbury Air Regional Plan Rules

All Agricultural Crop Residue Burning must be compliant with Environment Canterbury's Air Regional Plan rules. All farmers are now required to complete a smoke management plan and if they are within the crop residue buffer zones around Timaru or Ashburton a resource consent to burn is also required. Please contact Environment Canterbury for more information www.ecan.govt.nz or 0800 324 636.