

**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 08, 2020**

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**SUBJECT**     **Land Clearing Debris and Household Hazardous Waste Management on Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To inform the committee of two solid waste management issues raised by residents of the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas.

**BACKGROUND**

Recently, there have been two issues that have been brought to the attention of Capital Regional District (CRD) solid waste staff – Open Burning and Household Hazardous Waste (HHW). This report is intended to provide background information and context for these two issues.

The BC Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation governs the burning of vegetative material associated with a range of activities, including land clearing and forestry operations, and sets out conditions under which open burning of vegetative debris can be conducted. The regulation was recently revised for the primary purpose of reducing the impacts to human health and minimizing the risk to air quality. All of the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI), with the exception of Saturna Island and the northern half of Galiano Island, are classified as a High Smoke Sensitivity Zone. The high sensitivity classification effectively eliminates the practice of open burning as an option for the management of land clearing debris on the SGI. As a result of this change, the Pender Island Fire Chief has expressed concern that land clearing, forest management and yard waste can no longer be disposed of on Pender Island through open burning. The Chief raised specific concern about a stockpile of stumps that have accumulated on Pender Island by private land developers and was seeking assistance from the CRD's Environmental Resource Management Division (ERM) in managing it. There is no CRD solid waste management service on Pender Island; therefore, ERM does not have authority to expend resources to manage this stockpile. Alternatives to burning that could be used to manage the stockpile by those who created it are grinding and composting the material. This is consistent with how land clearing waste is managed in the rest of the region.

The disposal of HHW on Salt Spring, Pender, Mayne, Galiano and Saturna islands (the Islands) has been raised by the recycling depot operators on each of these five islands. Collectively, they have expressed a desire for ERM to return to providing annual mobile HHW collection events on each island, as was done from 2006 to 2013. These events were discontinued due to budgetary issues and the fact that the reason for undertaking them, which was to clear historic accumulations of HHW from homes on the islands, was largely accomplished. All residents in the region, including those on the Islands, are welcome to use the HHW drop-off depot at Hartland Landfill to safely dispose of HHW free of charge. The depot is open to receive HHW six days per week. Residents on the Islands are advised to transport their HHW items for disposal through the same means by which they were brought onto the island and not to let them accumulate in their homes. Staff are planning additional HHW communications efforts in 2020 to increase awareness of disposal options, including additional outreach for the Islands.

**CONCLUSION**

The revised BC Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation has effectively eliminated the use of open burning as a disposal option for land clearing and other vegetative waste on the Southern Gulf Islands. The responsibility for disposal of this material rests with the waste generators and/or the owner of the property on which the stockpile rests.

Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste from Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands, along with HHW from all other residents in the region, is available free of charge at Hartland Landfill. The depot is open to receive HHW six days per week.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Electoral Areas Committee receive this report for information.

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