**Personal Protective Equipment**

* Sturdy appropriate footwear including boot equipped with good soles (Vibram) or caulks if walking woody debris
* High visibility clothing and clothing that is fire resistant (e.g. cotton or wool, not polyesters) or commercially treated (e.g. Nomex)
* Hardhat of a contrasting color
* Fire resistant gloves that are suitable for the type of light up fuel being used, and chemical resistant gloves for fuel.

**SAFE Procedures**

**PILE CONSTRUCTION, CURING AND SEASONING**

* Pile as high as possible while maintaining safety for the machine operator and stability of the pile for subsequent ground crews; and fuel should be continuous / compact with mix of sizes. Piles can be either Category 2 open fire or Category 3 open fire (3 or more piles, or greater than 2 m in height or 3 m in width), depending on the number and size of the piles as per Wildfire Regulations.
* Place material into a haystack or bell shape to shed water and to increase the chimney / venting effect with height
* Create a mixture of fuel sizes / types. Fine fuels (branches, needles and leaves) should be mixed with short chunks and non- merchantable stems;
* Avoid large stumps and root wads. These should be excluded from piles and dispersed back into the setting where possible;
* Avoid piling soils, rocks or any prohibited materials which may increase smoke generation;
* Make fewer, larger piles without compromising crew safety; and
* Piles should be seasoned until they can combust easily. Typically the curing period
* should be at least one summer.

**PLANNING FOR THE BURN SEASON**

The following best management practices should be completed prior to burning:

* Compile a list of cut blocks, road sides, landings and other sites that have piles that need to be burned and have cured sufficiently.
* Develop a Burn Plan that includes each cut block; road networks and landings based on location, elevation and predicted acceptable burning conditions (e.g. first light snow).
* Check weather forecast; danger class reports and venting indices for planned burning window.
* Check conditions again on day of the burning and obtain a Burning Reference Number for larger piles (Category 3 open fire).

**CHECK EQUIPMENT**

Complete an equipment check prior to the planned burning day including:

* Have sufficient fire tools, water tanks and pumps; fire extinguishers, radios and fire aid kits.
* If crews will be dispersed, have enough radios available.
* Enough PPE for all workers.
* Sufficient fuel or fire starter mixed such as Diesel/Gas (75/25) mix for drip torches (Flash 21 Jelling additive for snow covered piles); or propane for torches; and have the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) available and known to all workers.
* Check that all ignition equipment is in good working order including drip torches; propane tanks; and propane hoses.

**CREW TRAINING**

Burns operators will ensure all supervisors; ground crews and machine operators are trained in rules and standard operating procedures (SOPs) such as:

* All crew members must have training compatible with the Fire Line training modules S100 or S100A – refresher.
* Wildfire Act and Wildfire Regulation requirements; Environmental Management Act (EMA) and Open burning Smoke Control Regulations (OBSCR) requirements;
* Supervisors must be aware of medical conditions that may jeopardize an employee’s safety (asthma).
* Smoke management strategies and Best Management Practices (BMPs);
* All relevant company-related Safe Work Procedures (SWPs);
* Burn pile construction, Burn pile ignition and Firefighting;
* Fuel handling, storage and spill reporting; and
* Site specific Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) with GPS coordinates

**PRIOR TO LIGHT UP**

On the day of lighting up the piles:

* Review the burn or light-up plan; escape routes, contingency plans, hazards (e.g. danger trees, steep slopes and debris) and location of all piles to be ignited with the workers.
* Any danger trees observed by the crew should be reported; felled or assessed and flagged “no work”
* Park vehicles in a safe location ready for evacuation (e.g. facing towards town).
* Establish and discuss an emergency response plan including evacuation marshaling points.
* Establish check in intervals and check radio function; and reinforce that no one works alone (e.g. pairs)
* Confirm weather and venting index
* Mix fuels in a safe location- NO SMOKING!
* Check torches are safe to use-i.e. no parts are missing.

**LIGHTING UP PILES**

Follow your burn plan and only deviating after confirming with supervisor.

* If necessary to refuel torch notify team leader or supervisor.
* When using a propane torch, turn the flame to minimum when moving between piles.
* Use extra caution on steep slopes and around landing piles and be sure of footing and escape routes.
* Cease light up if fire is spreading into slash/timber; and extinguish, control and mop-up any escapements.
* Cease burning if you spill any light up fuel on yourself.
* Monitor burning rate and adjust light up rate.
* **Important -** **Continue to monitor burning piles at end of day and check piles next day for escapes.**