

# WILDFIRE MESSAGING UPDATE

FOR BC'S TOURISM INDUSTRY

AUGUST 18, 2021



As you know, over the past weeks, communities in BC have been impacted by wildfires, leading to the declaration of a [Provincial State of Emergency](#). While as an industry we take pride in welcoming visitors from near and far, there are certain instances, such as wildfires, where we must shift our efforts to help support emergency response efforts. As always, the health and safety of our communities, residents and visitors remain our top priority.

## SITUATION UPDATE

**The Government of BC has issued a request for visitors to avoid all non-essential travel to or through impacted areas.** Impacted areas are defined by Emergency Management BC as areas currently under an evacuation order or evacuation alert.

Areas not under an evacuation order or alert can continue to receive visitors, provided the destination does not require travel through an impacted area to get there. While we understand this creates implications for communities who are

not otherwise under an order/alert, it is crucial that we keep those nearby roads clear. Circumstances can change quickly, requiring immediate access for fire crews and for potential evacuees.

The current wildfire situation in British Columbia is dynamic, with conditions and alerts changing rapidly. Destination BC is issuing the following guidance to help BC's tourism industry navigate the ever-changing circumstances.

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## STAY SAFE, STAY INFORMED

During these emergencies, the tourism and hospitality industry is an important conduit to official information sources for visitors. Our priority is ensuring that travelers have all the official resources they need to make informed decisions based on the latest, on-the-ground information, and to encourage them to continue to consult these resources for any updates before and during their trips. Also available on HelloBC's [Know Before You Go page](#), here are the key resources to both reference for your own business planning, and to share with visitors:

- Information about emergencies in BC, including a [regularly updated list](#) of evacuation orders and alerts. Check this list at least daily for updates.
- Twitter: [@EmergencyInfoBC](#)  
[#BCFlood](#) [#BCWildFire](#)

## BC WILDFIRE SERVICE

- Download the BC Wildfire App before your trip to have real-time information on alerts, orders and conditions near you, at your fingertips! The App is available for both [Android](#) and [Apple](#) devices.
- [Interactive map](#) of all active wildfires across the province.
- Twitter: [@BCGovFireInfo](#)
- Facebook: [Facebook.com/BCForestFireInfo/](#)
- [Campfire bans, restrictions and forest use](#)
- Report wildfires to \*5555 on a cell or 1-800-663-5555 toll-free.

- Information about road closures, major events, and transportation delays.
- Twitter: [@DriveBC](#)

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## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Share these resources with your employees and guests and stay up-to-date on the latest news and developments.
- Encourage visitors to download the BC Wildfire app, to stay informed, and to respect the advisories and orders in place.
- If your business is in an impacted area, provide your current customers and future reservations with regular updates, by directing them to official information sources. Be as flexible as possible with re-booking options, and encourage visitors to consider adjusting their travel dates for another time.
- If your business is not impacted directly, help your current guests plan the rest of their trip to destinations that are safe and open for business in areas outside those designated as on evacuation alert or evacuation order (your local [Visitor Centre](#) has a wealth of information on places to stay and things to do across BC).
- If your business is not impacted directly, be proactive with future reservations—let your customers know that it's currently business as usual, but they should be mindful of road closures and restrictions that could impact access to the destination. Encourage them to check the key resources noted above regularly, and to reach out with any questions.
- If your business/region has other properties/communities that are not impacted, consider encouraging guests to re-book their travel to the area not under alert or order. British Columbia is a very large province, and there are many communities and travel experiences that have capacity and are ready to welcome visitors.

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## WHAT DESTINATION BC WILL DO

- Destination BC's consumer marketing efforts will continue to promote the province as appropriate, by placing focus on areas that are not currently included in the list of impacted areas or do not require visitors to travel through impacted areas, and supporting impacted areas once it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Destination BC will continue to leverage **Know Before You Go** as a central message in visitor-facing content, while ensuring visitors know where to find official information resources and amplifying the real-time content and updates from our tourism partners around the province.
- Destination BC also works closely with the Provincial Government, including the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport and Emergency Management BC, to ensure tourism is part of response and recovery efforts. Destination BC sits on daily, cross-government calls with agencies including Emergency Management BC and the BC Wildfire Service to report on, and request information, on behalf of BC's tourism industry.
- If you have concerns with media coverage or messaging, please contact Destination BC at [media.relations@destinationbc.ca](mailto:media.relations@destinationbc.ca) and we will work with you, our communications counterparts in the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre and the media, to clarify, correct or update public information.