

Wildfire Hazard DPA – Frequently Asked Questions

Environment Department – Phone: 604.990.2480 or Email: environment@dnv.org

1) Why Wildfire Hazard Protection?

In 2007, the District of North Vancouver (DNV or District) retained BA Blackwell & Associates to assist in the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and a 2019 CWPP Update that quantifies wildfire risk in the District of North Vancouver <https://www.dnv.org/community-environment/community-wildfire-protection-plan>. As part of a coordinated response to reduce wildfire risk, the District has implemented many of the recommendations in this report including fuel treatments, public education and improving wildfire suppression response. The Wildfire Hazard DPA (Development Permit Area) was established to encourage activities that reduce the risk from wildfire hazards to people, property and the District's forests and ecosystems in the context of environmental protection.

2) When did Council adopt legislation requiring a Wildfire Hazard DPA?

The requirement for this Development Permit (DP) is set out in Schedule B of the Official Community Plan adopted in July, 2012 <https://dnv-docs.simplicitycms.ca/documents/ocp-schedule-b-dpa.pdf>

3) Which properties are included and where can I see a map of all of the Wildfire Hazard areas in the District?

All properties located in the District's forested wildland / urban interface and some District Park areas. These Wildfire Hazard areas are identified on Geoweb on the District's GIS website at <http://geoweb.dnv.org/> under applications, properties, layers, layer manager, DPA Wildfire Hazard. The lighter brown layer indicates the property is in the Wildfire Risk Area and the orange layer indicates the property is in the Wildfire Interface Area. The Wildfire Hazard guidelines apply to both areas.

4) When would I need a Wildfire Hazard Development Permit?

If your property is in the Wildfire Hazard DPA (Development Permit Area), and you are planning to build a new or replacement house, a Development Permit is required.

5) What do I need to do to apply for a Wildfire Hazard Development Permit?

You will need to submit a signed report by a qualified professional (QP) with the appropriate credentials. The report must follow the format and address all the requirements identified in the *Wildfire Hazard Report – Master Requirement SPE 115* <https://docs.dnv.org/documents/wildfire-hazard-report.pdf>

6) Where can I find a Wildfire Qualified Professional?

The District of North Vancouver maintains a list (available on request) but does not recommend one company over another. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list, and you may find other companies by searching local directories.

7) I am just doing a renovation; do I still need to get a Development Permit?

No. Minor renovations are exempt from requiring a Wildfire Hazard Development Permit. However, the FireSmart guidelines are strongly recommended for all auxiliary structures, new roofs or renovations within the Wildfire Hazard DPA. <https://www.dnv.org/your-home-property/how-you-can-help-reduce-risk-wildfire>

8) Can I apply for my Wildfire DP at the same time as my demolition and building permits?

Yes - providing a tree survey and Arborist report that reviews the potential impact of the proposed development has been submitted and approved by District staff. The Arborist report must make recommendations as to the number of bylaw trees to be removed or pruned for tree permitting requirements, and the protection measures to be used for all trees to be retained on and off-site.

9) Is my Wildfire Hazard report also an Arborist report?

No. The wildfire report only determines the wildfire risks and recommends the measures to reduce this risk to the proposed development. The Arborist report looks at the construction, excavations, servicing, drainage, grade changes and hard and soft landscaping impacts of the proposal and recommends protection requirements for retained trees on and off-site.

10) I have my Wildfire DP; can I now undertake the works to the trees slated for removal or pruning?

No. You will still require a tree permit to be issued for the removal or pruning of any bylaw tree or large diameter trees. Any off-site or shared trees will also require authorization by the owner of the property before a tree permit is issued.

11) How will the Wildfire Hazard DPA affect my property for future development?

Any development that involves building a new home will have to comply with the Wildfire Hazard DPA to help reduce the risk from wildfire hazards to people, property and the District's forests and ecosystems while encouraging activities that reduce wildfire hazards in the context of environmental protection.

12) Will the Wildfire Hazard DP affect how large of a home I can build?

Potentially the building footprint may need to be adjusted to reflect development permit requirements.

13) The owner of the property next door/across the street/at the end of my block built a new home, can I build mine like theirs?

Every lot is unique and not all lots are in the Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area. Additionally, some lots are in other Development Permit areas (e.g. Streamside and /or Slope Hazard); therefore, it is not possible to compare lots to each other.

14) How long does the Wildfire Hazard DP process take?

Process time varies depending on whether or not there are any other DPs required, the completeness and accuracy of the reports and information received and the overall complexity of the project. Once all information is received, then processing generally takes 4 – 6 weeks. This may depend on whether additional information is required to process the application.

15) How much does a Wildfire Hazard DP cost?

The fees are set out in the Fees and Charges Bylaw.

16) Why do I need a QP to sign off once the house has been built?

To ensure that all fire risk recommendation measures pursuant to the submitted Wildfire Risk Report and the Wildfire DPA guidelines have been successfully met. This will also be a requirement for the building permit final inspection for the release of the occupancy permit and landscape/building security deposit.

17) Do I have to landscape my property with low-flammable plants and trees?

Yes. Within the defensible 1.5m space immediately surrounding the house, is a designated fuel free area (no flammable materials or landscaping) and within 1.5m and 10m space, low-flammable plant species are used, as recommended by the Wildfire QP and required in the DPA guidelines. Further, the QP will not be able to sign-off if flammable species have been planted within these designated defensible spaces within the subject Lot.

18) What do I submit if the property falls within multiple DPAs?

If your property falls into multiple DPAs for Protection of the Environment and/or Protection of Development from Hazardous Conditions, please review all relevant information on the District's [Development Permit Areas \(DPA\) \(dnv.org\)](https://dnv.org) prior to any type of design work. If clarification is still needed, you may contact staff in the Environment Section.

Properties within multiple DPAs should have a coordinated response to ensure that the greater potential impacts to the site are assessed at an early stage and to avoid recommendations for tree removal / retention that conflict with recommendations by other qualified professionals on other aspects. To achieve this, you will need to designate a lead professional to coordinate all aspects of the required DPA reports and review the process with DNV staff.

19) What do I do if the property is also within a DPA for:

- **Form & Character for Commercial, Industrial or Multi-Family Development and / or**
- **Energy & Water Conservation & Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions?**

If your property also falls within one of these DPAs, please review all relevant information on the District's website prior to any type of [Development Permit Areas \(DPA\) \(dnv.org\)](https://dnv.org) design work. The lead DNV staff contact will be a Development Planner. You can contact Development Planning by telephone at 604-990-2387 or by email at planning@dnv.org for an appointment.

20) Do District of North Vancouver (DNV) projects have to follow the DPA guidelines?

Yes, all DNV projects are expected to follow the DPA guidelines. However, the DNV is responsible for maintaining and providing critical public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and sanitary sewer pipes and for maintaining existing community service infrastructure.

Much of this infrastructure was installed many years ago when knowledge and requirements protecting riparian lands were not as prevalent. In many cases there were no regulations governing environmental protection at the time of design and construction. As a result, much of this infrastructure is located in areas of sensitive environmental habitat that would be preferable to avoid all together, but this is not always possible. The DNV strives to adhere to the most current environmental best management practices in all of our operations and capital projects.