

Fire danger rating to dropping to moderate?

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Fire Departments of Dufferin County are anticipating a county-wide fire ban to drop to a moderate fire danger rating as of Friday (June 16).

Speaking with the Free Press, Shelburne Fire Chief Ralph Snyder said the likely decision to remove the county-wide fire ban is due to the significant rainfall the area has seen since the fire ban was enacted.

Fire Chiefs at Dufferin County departments initially raised concerns about high fire danger at the beginning of June due to the dry and hot weather conditions.

The decision to enact the high fire danger level was made by a group of fire chiefs from local fire departments, including Grand Valley, Shelburne, Orangeville, Mulmur/Melanchton, and Rosemont.

"We ask that residents avoid all unnecessary outdoor fire burning until the weather conditions change and we are able to return to normal levels of fire danger," said acting Orangeville Fire Chief Michael Richardson in a June 1 press release. "When danger levels are higher than normal, fires can spread more easily. If an outdoor fire is necessary, please be mindful of your surroundings."

A week after raising the fire danger level to high, the working group of Fire Chiefs announced the immediate issuing of a county-wide fire ban in June. The fire ban prohibited all open-air burnings.

In a June 8 press release from Dufferin County fire chiefs, they said the decision came after particularly dry weather conditions in the Dufferin area and limited rainfall, along with an air quality warning for the region due to smoke from wildfires in Ontario and Quebec.

A moderate fire danger rating will mean that Dufferin County residents will need to take caution when having open-air flames.

The wildfire or forest fires season in Canada commonly runs from May to September.