

Following are answers/information from Kelsi Mottet, Whidbey Island Conservation District, based on questions and requests from Sierra's March 2019 Firewise workshop:

Outdoor Burning / Burn Bans / Burn Permits:

- Island County's Environmental Health Department oversees Outdoor Burning: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/EH/Burning/Pages/Home.aspx>.
- Island County Environmental Health Department issues outdoor burning permits for certain types of burning, and there is a map for active burn permits anyone can access [link here](#).
- Island County Environmental Health Department also talks about how the Northwest Clean Air Agency and Department of Natural Resources are in charge of specific types of permits other than what Island County has authority over. You can learn more at their [Other Burning](#) page.
- The Northwest Clean Air Agency created an introductory document that talks about Outdoor Burning and can be [found here](#).
- Individuals can file complaints about outdoor burning if it is reducing air quality through the [Northwest Clean Air Agency's Complaint page](#). The page offers other recommendations, such as talking to your neighbor first prior to filing a complaint, but also provides a place for submitting the complaint if that is the desired outcome of the landowner to do so.

Island County Code:

- Island County Code for Wildfire abatement and enforcement: No specific language found for this, but interested persons can search the [Municipal Code for Island County](#) website themselves.
- Also, one can reach out to [Island County Public Works](#), as oftentimes "clearing and grading" permits are managed and issued by Public Works employees. Kelsi is aware that in areas adjacent to and within a specific distance of a "critical area" – i.e. wetlands, streams, bluffs, shorelines, unstable slopes, and other areas of that nature for which the Island County staff can provide the exact definition, there are specific guidelines that must be met and permits issued prior to the removal of vegetation in and around those areas.

Solar Panel Fire Safety:

With any solar panel installation on roofs it is important to maintain/clean the area underneath them regularly so that flammable materials such as leaves, pine needles, and branches do not accumulate.

For more information go to the [SFPE Educational & Scientific Foundation](#) website.

Additionally, the following information was shared by Daniel Gorham, a Research Engineer from the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety. Please contact Daniel with any questions about this topic at dgorham@ibhs.org and/or (803) 789-4209.

- Residential roof-mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels is an emerging issue topic that several groups are actively researching.
- IBHS is currently planning an experimental test project for 2019 to evaluate wind loads on roof-mounted residential PV and potential vulnerabilities to wildland fire.

- From Daniel's initial review of a typical residential roof-mounted PV systems there are similar crevices/voids where debris could accumulate. This debris can be ignited by flames or air-borne embers that may lead to ignition of the building.
- There are standard test methods (ASTM E-108, UL 790, others) that are used to evaluate fire resistance of roofs. One of the test methods subjects the roof assembly to a burning wood crib which could be similar to burning debris. There has been some previous work (<http://www.solarabcs.org/about/publications/reports/flammability-testing/pdfs/SolarABCs-36-2013-1.pdf>) that investigated how roof assemblies with PV panels perform during a standard test.