

Prescribed Fires

The City of Saskatoon's Prescribed Fire Program is part of an overall strategy for enhancing the biodiversity of naturalized areas in Saskatoon parks.

The Parks Department, with support from Meewasin Valley Authority and the Saskatoon Fire Department, conduct brief, small-scale prescribed fires in select naturalized park areas when required (typically each spring and fall).

What is a prescribed fire?

Prescribed fire is the planned and controlled application of fire to a defined area of land. It's an ecologically beneficial and efficient way to achieve planned public safety and resource management objectives, for example to enhance a habitat by helping to control a weed infestation.

Prescribed fires are planned for the spring or fall, when prescribed fires can be conducted at a lower intensity and produce less smoke than unplanned wildfires that generally occur under warmer and drier conditions.

Prescribed fires do not take place during the nesting season for ground nesting birds, and because only small areas of land are burned at any given time, wildlife are able to temporarily relocate. Prescribed fires are a common, cost effective management practice in many cities across Canada and the United States, and have been conducted safely for many years.

Prescribed fires are performed by trained Parks staff and safety is the number one priority. The air quality is monitored, and the Saskatoon Fire Department is either on-site or on call to help manage the fire if needed.

What are the benefits of prescribed fires?

- Improves the health and biodiversity of the grasslands by removing the thatch layer that develops over time
- Helps native plants, which are fire adapted, outcompete weeds by destroying seeds and newly forming buds
- Enhances and conserves habitat for wildlife
- Helps manage invasive species
- Reduces the risk of wildfire



What you can expect during and after a prescribed fire:

- Small areas of land are burned during a fire, so only portions of a park are blackened at any given time
- The surrounding area may experience some smoke
- Shrubs and trees are not burned and therefore are not negatively impacted
- Vigorous new growth occurs following a fire (in a matter of weeks in the spring), which is appreciated by wildlife
- The reduction in accumulated dead plant material provides protection against accidental wildfires

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Be notified of the location, date and time prior to each fire.
saskatoon.ca/servicealerts

Residents and visitors that frequent parks are asked to avoid prescribed fire areas and can expect smoke in the surrounding area. The City of Saskatoon thanks you for your cooperation.

For more information, visit saskatoon.ca/prescribedfires or call 306-975-3300.



saskatoon.ca/prescribedfires