

Local municipalities enact total fire bans

By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The townships of Limerick, Tudor and Cashel and Wollaston are under a total fire ban as of June 2 until hot, dry conditions meriting the ban change, according to a media release issued on June 1. Victoria Tisdale, the clerk and treasurer with Limerick Township, Ben Samann, owner of Land'escapes, and Bernice Crocker, clerk and administrator with Wollaston Township comment on this ban. The total fire ban went into effect at 7 a.m. on June 2 due to the high amounts of blown down trees due to last year's derecho, which makes the risk of forest fires very high in conjunction with the hot and dry conditions recently. This ban was put into place and can be lifted at the sole discretion of the fire chiefs of Limerick and Wollaston. During this fire ban, there is no open-air burning, including; setting and maintaining or causing to be set or maintain an open-air fire, no cooking or warming fires are allowed, and no fireworks can be set off. However, if they are easily turned off and located on a non-combustible surface, propane barbecues may still be used during this fire ban. Fire bans are advertised on the respective municipal websites and in local media. Fire sign meters will advertise a total fire ban and can be found at the following locations; 89 Limerick Lake Road (municipal office), Hwy 62, Weslemkoon Lake Road, North Steenburg Lake Road, South Steenburg Lake Road, Limerick Lake Lodge, and Hwy 620 East and West of Wollaston Township. If a fire occurs, and all fires must be reported, please call 911. The number for Limerick Fire Chief Greg Maxwell is 613-332-8898 and the number for Wollaston Fire Chief Jack Donnelly is 613-337-9420. Fire Chief Donnelly had no comment when contacted by Bancroft This Week and Fire Chief Maxwell did not return a request for comment by press time. Land'escapes, which owns thousands of acres in Limerick and Tudor and Cashel Townships, is also adhering to this total fire ban, according to Samann. Land'escapes obviously complies with all fire bans issued by Limerick Township for the park, and other townships for other lands, and enforces the rules for all staff and visitors, he says. Total fire bans have also been put into place in South Algonquin Township, Faraday Township and Carlow Mayo Township, as posted on their respective municipal websites. Jenny Snider, the CAO/clerk of Carlow Mayo Township says they'll be keeping the total fire ban in effect until they get more rain. With all the fires in Ontario and elsewhere resources are stretched thin, so we will do what we can to help prevent more strain. We would like to thank everyone for obeying the ban and doing their part to keep the community safe. Tisdale said that the fire ban for Limerick, Tudor and Cashel and Wollaston had been called by both Maxwell and Donnelly. The major concern is the blowdown from last year's derecho, and hot, dry conditions from this past week have increased the fire risk, she says. Crocker told Bancroft This Week that she fully supports the fire ban issued by Limerick, Wollaston and Tudor and Cashel Townships given the current fire situations. As of June 1, most of northeastern and northwestern regions of the province were placed within a Restricted Fire Zone to ensure that open fires and the burning of grass or debris are temporarily banned, she says. It is just a good judgment call for the fire chiefs given that we all have volunteer firefighters. On Monday, June 5 the Town of Bancroft as well as the municipalities of Hastings Highlands and Addington Highlands also enacted total fire bans.