

RCW 76.04.660 Additional fire hazards—Extreme fire hazard areas—Abatement, isolation or reduction—Summary action—Recovery of costs—Inspection of property.

(1) The owner of land on which there is an additional fire hazard, when the hazard is the result of a landowner operation or the land is within an area covered by a forest health hazard warning issued under RCW 76.06.180, shall take reasonable measures to reduce the danger of fire spreading from the area and may abate the hazard by burning or other satisfactory means.

(2) An extreme fire hazard shall exist within areas covered by a forest health hazard order issued by the commissioner of public lands under RCW 76.06.180 in which there is an additional fire hazard caused by disturbance agents and the landowner has failed to take such action as required by the forest health hazard order. The duties and liability of such landowner under this chapter are as described in subsections (5), (6), and (7) of this section.

(3) The department shall adopt rules defining areas of extreme fire hazard that the owner and person responsible shall abate. The areas shall include but are not limited to high risk areas such as where life or buildings may be endangered, areas adjacent to public highways, and areas of frequent public use.

(4) The department may adopt rules defining other conditions of extreme fire hazard with a high potential for fire spreading to lands in other ownerships. The department may prescribe additional measures that shall be taken by the owner and person responsible to isolate or reduce the extreme fire hazard.

(5) The owner or person responsible for the existence of the extreme fire hazard is required to abate, isolate, or reduce the hazard. The duty to abate, isolate, or reduce, and liability under this chapter, arise upon creation of the extreme fire hazard. Liability shall include but not be limited to all fire suppression expenses incurred by the department, regardless of fire cause.

(6) If the owner or person responsible for the existence of the extreme fire hazard or forest debris subject to RCW 76.04.650 refuses, neglects, or unsuccessfully attempts to abate, isolate, or reduce the same, the department may summarily abate, isolate, or reduce the hazard as required by this chapter and recover twice the actual cost thereof from the owner or person responsible. Landowner contingency forest fire suppression account moneys may be used by the department, when available, for this purpose. Moneys recovered by the department pursuant to this section shall be returned to the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account.

(7) Such costs shall include all salaries and expenses of people and equipment incurred therein, including those of the department. All such costs shall also be a lien upon the land enforceable in the same manner with the same effect as a mechanic's lien.

(8) The summary action may be taken only after ten days' notice in writing has been given to the owner or reputed owner of the land on which the extreme fire hazard or forest debris subject to RCW 76.04.650 exists. The notice shall include a suggested method of abatement and estimated cost thereof. The notice shall be by personal service or by registered or certified mail addressed to the owner or reputed owner at the owner's last known place of residence.

(9) A landowner or manager may make a written request to the department to inspect their property and provide a written notice that they have complied with a forest health hazard warning or forest health hazard order, or otherwise adequately abated, isolated, or

reduced an additional or extreme fire hazard. An additional or extreme fire hazard shall be considered to continue to exist unless and until the department, in its sole discretion, issues such notice. [2010 1st sp.s. c 7 s 130; 2007 c 480 s 13; 1986 c 100 s 39.]

Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7: See note following RCW 43.03.027.