

# NDP Caucus News

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## **“Where Is Government?” O’Leary Questions Government’s Communication on Wildfires**

As 28 wildfires continue to burn across the province and residents look to government for answers, NDP MHA Sheilagh O’Leary (St. John’s East–Quidi Vidi) is questioning why government members, including the Premier, continue to refuse to speak directly to the people of the province, instead directing residents to social media posts and written statements for critical information rather than speak to the public themselves.

O’Leary says the ongoing wildfire situation is the latest example of a government that fails to provide the leadership and open communication people expect.

“The confusion around the firework ban in metro yesterday and the [lack of direct communication from government about calling in support from other provinces is extremely concerning](#). Government sent out a release last evening, but that was pertaining to Labrador. Residents of my district were expected to go find information on social media – on a holiday – instead of government being clear about what rules have been put in place,” O’Leary said.

“If we’re already asking other provinces to help with wildfire suppression, you would think making sure residents clearly understand the restrictions ahead of multiple scheduled firework events would be a top priority. That requires timely, clear communication from our provincial government. Unfortunately, that’s not what we saw. The lack of communication causes me great concern, especially with the summer season just beginning.”

“Government not only chose not to speak to the media, but also [declined requests for comment](#), directing people instead to the NL Active Wildfires Dashboard – that is not even linked on the front page of the government website. That is simply not good enough. People deserve direct communication and accountability from their government. We saw how important that was during last year’s wildfires, when people needed straightforward, accessible updates, not more barriers or extra steps to find critical information, especially when safety could be at risk.”

“This silence is just another example of government not being available, refusing to comment directly to the people of the province,” said O’Leary. “At a time when people deserve clear, timely information, government seems unwilling to answer difficult questions or provide the openness that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians expect.”

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