

## **Q&A Fluorinated Wax Policy**

The Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club has adopted a new fluorinated wax policy. The policy bans the use of fluorinated ski waxes at our facilities and on our trails. The policy applies to anyone using WCCSC facilities, whether or not they are members, and includes racers and recreational skiers. Application of fluoro wax products are not permitted in our facilities. Skiers are not allowed to use fluoro waxes, even if these waxes are applied at home.

You can find the WCCSC policy here:

[https://www.xcskiwhitehorse.ca/\\_files/ugd/4ddcbf\\_d19ba676223f4016911ee2c0ea00ae14.pdf](https://www.xcskiwhitehorse.ca/_files/ugd/4ddcbf_d19ba676223f4016911ee2c0ea00ae14.pdf)

### **What is fluoro wax?**

Fluoro compounds are used in high performance waxes primarily for their ability to shed/repel water. Particularly in warm ski conditions, this can have a big impact on glide speed. In recent years substitute products have been introduced that have equal performance in many conditions.

Examples of fluoro glide waxes include:

- High Fluoro (HF), Medium Fluoro (MF) or Low Fluoro (LF) glide waxes, including HF, MF or LF powders, pucks, blocks and liquids.
- Cold-weather powder additives and hardeners containing fluoros
- Grip waxes that say “fluoro” or “fluorinated” on the label.

### **Why are fluoro waxes a problem?**

Fluorinated waxes and waxes containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have significant negative health and environmental consequences. These substances have the potential to harm the individual, enter our food and water supply and remain in the environment for generations. Many compounds found in fluorinated waxes are banned for sale by the European Chemicals Agency and are listed in the United States Environmental Protection Agency Toxic Substances Act. The International Ski Federation (FIS), Nordiq Canada, Biathlon Canada and the United States Ski and Snowboard Association have all committed to eliminate fluorinated wax products from competition.

### **Why now?**

The club has had an unwritten policy banning fluoro waxes for two years now and we have been encouraging members not to use them. Fluoro waxes are no longer sold in our shop. All major wax manufacturers are no longer making fluorinate products and are developing alternatives that they claim are even better.

Although fluoro waxes are still permitted at the elite (Tier 1) racing levels in Canada, progress on fully implementing the ban has been hampered by technical issues around detection at the elite racing level. We hope that by adopting this policy at the club, we can set an example for other clubs and help accelerate the larger process. Many other clubs, associations and events in Canada and the U.S. have enacted fluoro bans including some of the largest ones (Nakkertok Nordiq, Craftsbury Vermont, New England Nordic Ski Association) and one of the largest events in North America, the American Birkebiener, is fluoro free.

### **What about fluoro products I already own?**

You may already have some fluoro products and you may want to use them. In our opinion, the best thing you can do for your own health and for the environment is to dispose of them at a hazardous waste facility. You are not allowed to use them at the Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club.

Note, if you typically buy the cheapest wax available you do not have any fluoro wax. Since fluoro waxes are most useful in wet snow conditions (which is rare on our trails) it is very likely that you do not regularly use fluorinated wax. Some of the most popular grip waxes used on our trails like Super Blue, Rode Violet, Blue Super Extra, Multigrade Purple and Special Green are not fluoro waxes. If you are unsure about the wax you want to use, ask the staff at the Chalet for help.

### **How do I get rid of my fluorinated waxes?**

If you would like to dispose of your fluorinated products, please do not throw them in the garbage at home or in the waste baskets at the Chalet – after all, we are trying to keep these products out of the environment! There will be a fluoro wax collection box at the Ski Base shop. Our staff will take care of bringing these products to the hazardous waste depot.

***And to thank you for your good turn for the environment, we will offer a free ski club tuque, or coffee, tea and hot chocolate on a gift card card for every fluorinated product you leave in the drop box!***

### **So what waxes can I use?**

Nordiq Canada maintains a list of approved waxes on their website. As of the publication date of this notice, an excel spreadsheet with a full list of allowed glide waxes is available at [this](#) link. For grip waxes, here are few website of the largest manufacturers:

Swix: <https://www.swixsport.com/en/tips/articles/wax/fluorine-free-ski-waxing-swix/>

Rode: <https://www.rodewax.it/stick.2.26.12.sp.uw>

### **Enforcement of the Fluorinated Wax Ban**

The fluoro wax ban will be self-governed by ski club coaches, parents, athletes and club members. Any member found applying fluoro wax products on site will be reminded of the policy and may be subject to sanctions including suspension of membership for intentional and repeat violations.

If you have any further questions please reach out to the club manager.

### **Do I need to fully remove fluorinated products from my skis?**

You do not need to remove the wax you already have on your skis. It will wear off in time. If you want to fully remove the fluorinated glide wax from your skis, watch the video below.

### **Informative video on fluoro wax from a major manufacturer (Swix and Toko):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEUIkcSyZ4w>