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## Extreme Fire Danger Calls for Increased Caution

With the continuing extreme wildland fire danger, everyone who works and recreates outdoors is reminded to use caution and heed area restrictions.

Even the smallest spark can lead to significant wildfire damage to property and natural resources. Before engaging in any outdoor activities, carefully consider the potential for igniting a fire and the possible widespread consequences.

**STAGE II RESTRICTIONS:** South-central Montana continues to be under Stage II restrictions. Under Stage II, open burning, including campfires, is prohibited. Smoking is allowed only in areas cleared of all flammable materials. Motorized vehicles must stay on designated roads and trails, and be parked only in areas cleared of vegetation. Operating an internal combustion engine, welding, or using explosives is prohibited between 1 p.m. and 1 a.m. An exemption for agriculture harvesting is in effect, but those taking advantage of this exemption are urged to have equipment, including spark arrestors, in good working order.

Stage II restrictions apply to all lands within the Crow Reservation and Northern Cheyenne Agency and federal, state, and private lands in Treasure, Sweet Grass, Big Horn, Carbon, Musselshell, Stillwater and Yellowstone counties. Lands within a city boundary are exempted.

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Other exemptions include fires fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG, or other activities for which there is a permit or written authorization. However, an exemption does not absolve an individual or organization from liability or responsibility for any fire started by the exempted activity. Anyone who causes a wildland fire intentionally or through negligence will be held accountable for damage and suppression costs. For example, the cost of just one helicopter is about \$5,500 per hour.

**CLOSURES:** Two area closures are in effect because of the Derby Mountain Fire: Custer National Forest north and east of the Stillwater River, including the Stillwater River Trail; and the Big Timber Ranger District of the Gallatin National Forest, south of Interstate-90. Access to these areas is allowed only for fire personnel and by special permit.

Bureau of Land Management lands are closed to motorized vehicle use within the South Hills Motorcycle Area, Acton Recreation Area, and the Shepherd Ah Nei OHV Area.

For more information about fire prevention, please contact the Custer National Forest at 406-657-6200; Bureau of Land Management at 406-896-5013; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation at 406-247-4400; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-247-2940; Carbon County at 406-446-1595; Stillwater County at 406-321-0204; Sweet Grass County at 406-932-5143; Yellowstone County at 406-256-2775; or your local fire department or sheriff's office.

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