



For Immediate Release
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Fire restrictions begin Tuesday at midnight

In anticipation of escalating fire danger, Northwest Colorado sheriffs, fire officials and federal land managers are enacting fire restrictions beginning at midnight on Tuesday, July 10.

“Hot, dry, windy weather has caused vegetation to dry and it can easily be ignited,” said Cliff Hutton, Fire Management Officer of the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit. “Fire restrictions help avoid human-caused fires.”

Hutton explained that fire managers have criteria that must be met before enacting fire restrictions. These include predicted weather, low moisture content in trees, shrubs and other vegetation at different elevations, and resources available to respond to fires. Also considered is the energy release component, which is a method used to track fire danger. The ERC is currently very high.

The fire restrictions apply to all state, county and federal lands within Grand, Jackson, Routt, Moffat and Rio Blanco counties. This includes the Routt National Forest, Bureau of Land Management lands in Northwest Colorado, Dinosaur National Monument and Browns Park Fish and Wildlife Refuge.

“Generally speaking, no open fires are allowed anywhere in northwest Colorado, except in established campgrounds with provided fire rings,” Hutton said.

The fire restrictions or bans prohibit the following activities:

- Building or using any open fire or campfire, except within approved and provided fire grates at developed campgrounds, or within fully enclosed stoves, enclosed charcoal grills, or in stoves using pressurized liquid or gas
- Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle, building or developed recreation site or a cleared area of at least 3 feet in diameter.
- Operating a chainsaw, except those with approved spark arrestors.
- Using an acetylene welder, except in cleared areas of at least 10 feet in diameter
- Fireworks, explosive or any incendiary device

People should always work and recreate outdoors with a bucket, water source and shovel nearby.

Violating fire restrictions on federal lands could result in a fine of \$5,000 and six months in jail. Anyone negligently or willfully starting a wildland fire could also be held responsible for the costs of that fire.

Restrictions and penalties may vary slightly between counties. Please call your nearest county sheriff’s office or public land management agency for more information on fire restrictions and fire safety.

For a complete listing of fire restrictions in effect in Colorado see the Office of Emergency Management website at: <http://www.dola.state.co.us/oem/>