

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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State Forestry Urges Caution this Summer due to Fire Danger

SANTA FE – As the Memorial Day Holiday signals the unofficial start to the summer vacation season, fire danger remains high and the New Mexico State Forestry Division is urging all residents and visitors to be cautious with any use of fire as well as follow all fire restrictions while enjoying the state's abundant natural resources.

"We're still extremely dry in many areas, and all it takes is one careless mistake for a wildfire to endanger our lives and communities," said Forestry Division Fire Prevention and Outreach Program Manager Dan Ware. "With so many of us traveling this weekend and throughout the summer, it is crucial that we all be responsible and do our part to prevent wildfires."

This year, 139 fires have burned 1,071 acres across New Mexico on State or private land.

Recent strong winds, warm temperatures, prolonged drought, heavy fuel loads and an increase in fire activity across parts of New Mexico prompted State Forestry to issue fire restrictions on all state and private lands that are non-municipal, non-federal and non-tribal. Local governments and federal agencies have also begun issuing fire restrictions in many areas across the state. An updated list of locations with restrictions can be found at www.firerestrictions.us.

New Mexico State Forestry, along with local, state, federal and tribal interagency partners have the following tips to go by while enjoying the state's many outdoor recreation areas.

- Be aware of and follow all fire restrictions on local, state and federal lands.
- When traveling, only pull over into developed areas such as rest stops, to prevent heat from catalytic converters or exhaust emissions from sparking fires in roadside grass. Before leaving, ensure tires and brakes are in good shape as well.
- Never throw burning matches or cigarettes out a vehicle window.
- If campfires are allowed on public lands where you plan to travel, clear debris away from the fire ring and surround the fire with rocks. Keep water and a shovel nearby.
- Keep firewood and debris away from campfires or outdoor BBQ grills.
- Never walk away from a burning or smoldering campfire. Use water and dirt to completely extinguish the fire. The ground/coals should be cold to the touch before it is safe to leave.
- Remember that fireworks are NEVER allowed on public lands.
- Log onto www.nmforestry.com for links to wildfire and restriction information and more wildfire prevention and preparedness information.

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

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