

Burning Season

PLANNING STEPS FOR SUCCESS

Do you need any special permits or permission to burn from local, county or state agencies?

Did you make all of the necessary notifications to law enforcement, the fire department and your neighbors?

What is the weather doing and what will it be like when I start to burn today, tomorrow or the next day?

Are the winds going to pick-up in the afternoon? Remember, light winds in the morning can quickly change to strong winds in the afternoon.

Are any thunderstorms forecast for the area? The downdraft winds from nearby storms can be from any direction and as strong as 50+ miles per hour.

PREPARING THE AREA

Create firebreaks by raking, blading or plowing around the area you want to burn. By keeping that area free of burnable material, you will be better able to protect those places you don't want fire to get into.

Have a reliable water source available. This may require the use of a portable tank or pumps and a sufficient amount of hose.

Obtain your hand tools such as rakes and shovels in advance and have enough to outfit all of the participants of the burn.

Make sure everyone is dressed appropriately and wearing gloves to prevent burns. Shorts and synthetic clothing are not advised.

EXECUTING THE BURN

Start with the areas that may pose the greatest threat of becoming difficult to control or worse yet, escape!

Try to burn into the wind and keep the rate of fire spread low to aid you in maintaining control. This includes pile burning.

Don't get in a hurry; be calm and methodical once you begin the burn. Don't ignite too large an area too rapidly and always keep in mind where you could stop the burn in an emergency!

MAINTAINING CONTROL

Stay with the fire at all times. You may be held liable for damages caused by your fire and any suppression costs incurred.

Always burn with plenty of assistance at your disposal. The more help you have, the easier it is to control the fire.

If you are burning debris piles or areas with heavy concentrations of fuels, try to keep the fire small because large amounts of radiant heat can damage nearby trees, power lines and structures.

Never burn building materials, tires, plastic or other hazardous materials. The smoke and fumes from these materials are usually toxic and potentially deadly to you, your neighbors and anything else downwind!

DO NOT HESITATE to call for help from emergency services if the fire gets out of hand. The longer you wait, the larger the fire will become before help arrives.

When you are finished, make sure the fire is **DEAD OUT!** Every year fires break out when smoldering fires are left unattended!

WEATHER INFORMATION

Please check with the National Weather Service Office representing your area before you begin to burn.

The NWS website can provide you with a variety of useful weather products. Their website is: <http://www.weather.gov/>

IT IS NOT WISE TO BURN WHEN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ARE FORECASTED FOR YOUR AREA!

- **Red Flag Warning** – issued when a combination of strong winds, low humidity and dry fuels create the potential for explosive fire growth within the next 24 hours.
- **Fire Weather Watch** – issued 12 to 72 hours in advance when critical fire weather conditions are forecasted to occur.
- **High Wind Advisory** – issued when sustained surface winds exceeding 25 mph over land are either predicted or occurring for an unspecified period of time.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Always strive to keep informed and well prepared before you start your burn! Find out everything you can about the weather, other fires, drought conditions, etc.

Gathering some basic information prior to initiating your project can save you and others a lot of grief later on!

NOTIFICATIONS

Although it may not be required in your area, always remember to call your local fire and law enforcement agencies. It helps to prevent false alarm calls and potentially “tying-up” agencies when they are needed for true emergencies.

Don't forget to notify your neighbors as well! It does a lot to prevent complaints and panic! Besides, they may want to help you with your burn.

SMOKE PERMITS

The State of Colorado requires permits for certain types of burns.

The Colorado Department of Health and Environment – Air Pollution Control Division is the agency responsible for issuance of smoke permits. Their general public phone number is 303-692-2000. Another great way to get your questions answered is to go to their website at: www.colorado.gov/airquality/

Remember to check with your local government or county. Some counties and municipalities require specific air quality permit authorizations.

OTHER PERMITS

Although the State of Colorado does not require any other specific open burning or fire control permits, many local and county governments may require these types of permits. Always check to see what is required where you plan on burning.

IMPORTANT NOTES & CONTACTS

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For additional information, check out the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention & Control website at: <http://dfs.state.co.us/>