



Debris Burning Closing to Reduce Risks of Wildfire

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Central Oregon District
Oregon Department of Forestry

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The Dalles, Ore. – Debris burning is the leading cause of wildfires across Oregon, already accounting for over 50 percent of the fires this year in the Central Oregon District. Escaped debris burns damage natural resources, threaten homes and communities, and can turn into a large wildfire.

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and all the fire districts in Hood River and Wasco County, will be implementing a coordinated burn ban effective 12:01 am on June 11, 2023. This ban includes open burning such as yard debris and burn barrels with the intent to prevent wildfires. The Wasco County Commissioners will also be proclaiming a burn ban, effective June 11, 2023, that covers all other lands in Wasco County outside of any fire protection district. Burn bans are imposed based on current conditions, long-term forecasts, as well as historic weather patterns and fuel conditions.

Fire managers were glad to see the snowpack stay above average through mid-spring this year but have seen a sharp decline over the last month, bringing it down below 70% across much of the area. They want to caution landowners that warm temperatures and dry periods quickly dry fine vegetative fuel, making it receptive to fire starts. Fire burning in these fine fuels quickly spreads to both live vegetation and larger fuels which have low fuel moisture due to underlying long-term drought conditions.

“We have seen many fires locally that are larger than normal for this time of year. Even the west side of Oregon has seen a few fires over 100 acres which is very uncommon during early fire season,” Erick Castaneda, The Dalles Wildland Fire Supervisor, said.

Any landowner who has burned this spring should revisit their burn site to ensure there is no fire or heat remaining, which could spread to adjacent fuels as seasonal weather returns. Warm temperatures, combined with wind can easily rekindle piles and spread embers outside a burn area.

Alternatives to burning, such as chipping or disposal at a local landfill are encouraged. If burning is the only option, cover the material and plan to burn later this fall after fire season ends and fall rains have reduced the potential for wildfires.

Counties and local fire departments may have additional restrictions in place. Check restrictions in your local area to help prevent wildfires. For additional information on ODF’s Central Oregon District, including contact information and unit offices, please visit www.ODFcentraloregon.com.



Central Oregon District At a glance

Fire protection for 2.3 Million acres of private and non-federal public forest and rangeland in 12 counties

Administer the Oregon Forest Practices Act

Provide technical and financial assistance to landowners