

## **DNR: Public encouraged to heed fire safety this Labor Day weekend**

### **Local News**

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Posted on : August 29, 2013 at 7:10 am

OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is urging campers, recreationists, woods workers, and other forest visitors to be especially careful with fire this weekend. Despite some recent regional precipitation, fire danger remains high in Washington. In an effort to reduce human-caused wildfires, DNR has issued a statewide burn ban on all lands under DNR protection, effective through September 30. The ban applies to all forestlands in Washington State, except federal lands. While campfires are allowed in approved pits west of the Cascade Mountains in all state, local and private campgrounds, they are not allowed east of the Cascade Mountains. DNR suggests always checking to see if there are additional local restrictions on campfires before leaving home to go camping or hiking. Because campgrounds may choose to ban campfires, it's best to check with the campground host before considering a campfire. For daily updates on burn restrictions, call 1-800-323-BURN or visit DNR's webpage showing fire danger and burning restrictions by county: <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>

In areas where campfires are allowed, DNR asks the public to please follow these suggestions: Use an existing fire ring; don't create a new one. Clear all vegetation away from the fire ring (remove all flammable materials, such as needles, leaves, sticks, etc.). Keep your campfire small. Keep plenty of water and a shovel nearby for throwing dirt on the fire if it gets out of control. Never leave a campfire unattended! When putting out your campfire, you should: First, drown the campfire with water. Next, mix the ashes and embers with soil. Scrape all partially-burned sticks and logs to make sure all the hot embers are off of them. Stir the embers after they are covered with water and make sure everything is wet. Feel the coals, embers, and any partially burned wood with your hands. Everything should be cool to the touch. When you think you are done, take an extra minute and add more water. Stir the remains, add more water, and stir again. If water is unavailable, use moist dirt. Be careful not to bury any hot or burning material, as it can smolder and later start a wildfire. Finally, check the entire campsite for possible sparks or embers; it only takes one to start a forest fire. *If it is too hot to touch, it is too hot to leave.* Remember, a little extra care takes only a few minutes of your time, and it could prevent a wildfire. **DNR statewide burn ban** In an effort to reduce preventable wildfires, DNR issued a statewide burn ban covering all DNR-protected lands, effective July 1, 2013, through September 30, 2013. The ban includes all forestlands in Washington except for federal lands. During the ban, designated campgrounds may allow campfires in approved fire pits. DNR or the campground management may put additional restrictions in place, including a ban on campfires, depending on weather conditions.