

## Washington DNR Urging Fire Safety This Labor Day Weekend

### Local News

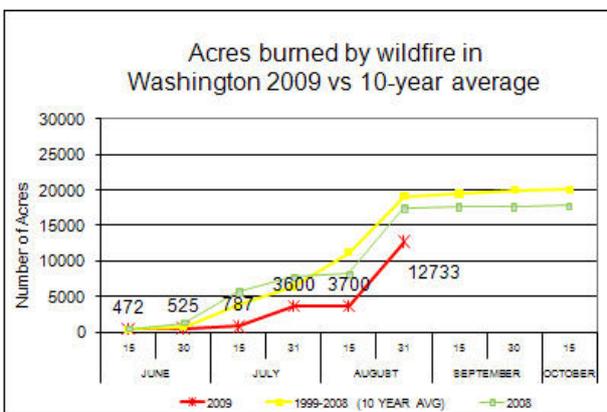
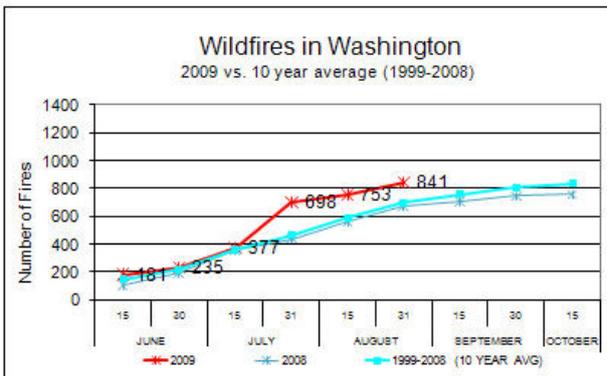
Posted by: David Haviland

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OLYMPIA &mdash; Despite the moderating weather conditions across much of the state, 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. Even with small amounts of rain, firefighters have been busy on both sides of the state putting out fires.

“We want people to be aware that even if we’ve had a few scattered showers, wildfires can still occur because of the very dry landscape,” said Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark. “We need much more rain than what this weekend will offer to help us with fire season.”

As of Monday, August 31, DNR released a snapshot of the number of wildfires and acres burned on state and private lands that the department protects. DNR has responded to 841 fires with a total of 12,733 acres burned to date. With the aid of favorable wind conditions, the department and other responding agencies have kept wildfire damage lower than average, despite the higher-than-usual number of wildfires.



Before heading out this Labor Day weekend, check with local authorities on burn restrictions. For daily updates on burn restrictions, call 1-800-323-BURN or visit DNR's web page showing fire danger and burning restrictions by county: <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/iredanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. To report a wildfire or an unattended campfire, call 911.

Not all public lands allow campfires. Where campfires are allowed, they're usually restricted to metal fire rings and must be kept to less than three feet in height and diameter.

Woods workers are encouraged to check <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/ifpl/IFPL.aspx> after 7 p.m. to determine the following day's fire precaution level, or to call the local DNR region office.

Given the fire conditions, DNR fire experts are warning individuals that it can be extremely dangerous to set off leftover fireworks in the forest. Besides being illegal, the discharge of even a single firework or explosive device in the forest poses a major risk of igniting multiple fire starts.

Motorists are reminded to stay on roadways because hot mufflers and catalytic converters can easily start wildfires. When operating ORVs, be sure to stick to designated trails and to examine spark arrestors to be sure they are in proper working order.

#### DNR's wildfire mission

Administered by Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark, DNR is responsible for preventing and fighting wildfires on 12.7 million acres of private, state, and tribal-owned forestlands in Washington. DNR is the state's largest on-call fire department. During fire season, this includes more than 700 DNR employees who have other permanent jobs with the agency and about 375 seasonal workers. DNR also participates in Washington's coordinated interagency approach to firefighting.