

NEW MEXICO Fire Information

For Immediate Release:
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An Interagency News Release

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FIRE OFFICIALS CONCERNED AS INDEPENDENCE DAY NEARS

Friday, June 23, 2006 - As the 4th of July nears, the worst of the fire danger is not yet over. Celebrations may need to go on with less of a bang than previous years because fire conditions are the worst seen since the 1950s. Fireworks have been prohibited on state and private unincorporated wildlands and always on federal and tribal lands in New Mexico. On state and private lands, wildlands are defined as being covered wholly or in part by timber, brush, grass, grain, or other flammable vegetation.

The use of fireworks has just become too dangerous. The Lincoln National Forest and Fort Stanton are in full closure, the Cibola National Forest and the Kiowa National Grasslands are in partial closure, all state lands are in restriction and many other federal lands are considering further closures. All agencies are recommending that people attend a community event or other display where area fire departments are staged to handle fire emergencies.

If fireworks are legal in your area, the key to a safe holiday is to find out where and when fireworks can be used. Remember, even though some fireworks are legal to buy it does not mean they are legal to use everywhere and anywhere. Start by contacting your local fire officials, law enforcement or community leaders. If you are found responsible for having started a wildfire with fireworks, you may be liable for all suppression and reclamation costs or even face imprisonment and fines. In a dangerous year like this, costs could be immense.

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For All New Mexico Fire & Restriction information:

www.nmfireinfo.com

or 1-877-864-6985

Fire conditions as well as localized closures and restrictions are subject to change. Because tribal, federal, state, and local mandates vary, there may be some differences in their restrictions. For a more detailed explanation of restrictions, please contact the nearest land management agency office where you plan to work or play, or visit websites www.nmfireinfo.com, or <http://gacc.nifc.gov/swcc/>, or call toll free 1-877-864-6985.



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RISK OF WILDFIRES HIGH USE FIREWORKS SAFELY WHERE PERMITTED

Friday, June 23, 2006 Wildland fire officials in New Mexico urge caution during the upcoming 4th of July due to the continuing heat and drought. Along with possible lightning-ignited fires, the risk of human-caused fire may increase with 4th of July activities. Fireworks are prohibited on all federal, state and private wildlands outside of incorporated cities in New Mexico. Check with your municipality on local regulations and locations where you can use fireworks, if they are permitted.

When wildfires are reported, a common statement by witnesses is that the fire spread faster than they could have imagined. Fireworks can easily ignite vegetation and may not be noticeable at first when hidden by grass or brush. It is dangerous to assume that this will not happen to you.

If you choose to use fireworks, please take these safety precautions:

- Light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, grass or other flammable materials. Use a graveled or paved area.
- Let fireworks cool then soak them in a bucket of water before disposal.
- Keep extra water, a hose and a fire extinguisher nearby in case of malfunction or fire.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Follow instructions carefully, with close adult supervision.
- Be sure others are out of range before lighting fireworks.

For fireworks safety tips or more information on fire restrictions or closures check out www.nmfireinfo.com or call the Restriction and Closure Hotline at (877) 864-6985.

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