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## Fire Danger **EXTREME** in Missoula County Residents and Visitors Asked to Use Caution When Outdoors

Missoula, Montana – Hot, dry conditions and lack of measurable precipitation forecasted are prompting Missoula County fire protection agencies to raise the fire danger in the Missoula area to EXTREME, effective immediately. Fire danger is a determination based on fuels, weather, topography, risk, and local knowledge and is a measure of the potential for a fire to ignite, spread, and require suppressive action. Extreme fire danger means that fires will start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious and direct attack is rarely possible. Controlling sparks is imperative. Missoula County has already experienced 61 reported wildland fires since the beginning of the year, with approximately 80% of those being human caused. These are 100% preventable!



“With conditions already so dry and with no reprieve in sight, it is critical that the public exercise caution while recreating outdoors,” emphasizes Ashleigh Burwick, Fire Management Officer for the Missoula Unit of the Department of Natural Resources & Conservation’s Southwestern Land Office. “Many of our human caused wildfires have been abandoned or escaped campfires and illegal trash or debris burning. All outdoor burning is closed in Missoula County, and it is never okay to leave a campfire unattended. When you are finished, make sure your campfire is cold to the touch—if it is too hot to touch then it is too hot to leave.”

While implementing area fire restrictions is being discussed, there are currently no fire restrictions in place in Missoula County aside from the fact that outdoor burning by permit remains closed. Residents and visitors are urged to visit [www.MTFireInfo.org](http://www.MTFireInfo.org) to learn of fire restrictions that are in place throughout Montana. While we cannot regulate the lightning, we CAN control our human caused sparks. We can also prepare for wildfire emergencies by signing up for Missoula County emergency alerts through [www.smart911.com](http://www.smart911.com) and following wildfire preparedness tips listed on [www.MCFPA.org](http://www.MCFPA.org).

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