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## Fall Burning--Essential Ag and Prescribed Wildland Only-- Opens Saturday, October 1 in Missoula County

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**Missoula, Montana** – In response to stable current and predicted fire danger, Missoula County fire protection agencies will open fall burning effective Saturday, October 1. At that time, the only burning that will be permitted is prescribed wildland and essential agriculture burning.

“Because the atmosphere becomes increasingly stable the later we get into fall, smoke from outdoor burning has the potential to linger longer in the area and get trapped under nightly inversions. To reduce the amount of smoke in the valleys, fall burning is limited to prescribed wildland and essential agriculture projects,” explains Sarah Coefield, Missoula City-County Public Health Dept. Air Quality Specialist. “Once burning opens in October, the Air Quality Program will look at smoke dispersion forecasts on a daily basis and issue restrictions based on atmospheric conditions.”

All outdoor burning in Missoula County is by permit only, and the General Burning Season (burning of yard debris/untreated vegetative waste generated onsite) is closed until March 1, 2023. Within Missoula City limits, parcels must be at least one acre or more in size to be eligible for an outdoor burn permit and recreational fires are banned year-round, with exceptions for barbecues. Visit [www.MissoulaCounty.us/airquality](http://www.MissoulaCounty.us/airquality) or [www.MCFPA.org](http://www.MCFPA.org) for more information on outdoor burning seasons, permits, and current restrictions.

For burning that is allowed as of October 1, please do so safely and responsibly—don’t let your burn get out of hand. “Be sure that you qualify, check current and expected weather, and have water and tools on hand and ready. It’s wise to stop burning by 2 p.m.,” emphasizes Anna Henderson, Fire Prevention Specialist for the Lolo National Forest. Burn permits can be obtained at <https://app.egovmt.com/burnpermit/> and permits must be activated before each burn.

Missoula County fire protection agencies recognize that with the arrival of crisp fall mornings and colorful hillsides, residents and visitors may be tempted to leave that warming fire smoldering or burn that growing pile of leaves and needles. Fire professionals caution, however, that conditions are still dry overall, and fires will still start from most accidental causes. Although intensity may be more moderate, it can still burn very hot! Do not get complacent and remember that it is illegal to burn your backyard pile of leaves and vegetative debris. As a reminder, inside the Missoula Air Stagnation Zone, it is illegal to burn piles of leaves and grass year-round. Visit [www.MissoulaCounty.us/airquality](http://www.MissoulaCounty.us/airquality) and choose Missoula Air Stagnation Zone on the left side menu for a map and more information.

Please remember that there are still fire restrictions in place across Montana, so be sure to check [www.MTFireInfo.org](http://www.MTFireInfo.org) and Know Before You Go!



LEARN BEFORE YOU BURN

**WORK SAFE.  
STAY SAFE.  
PREVENT WILDFIRE.**

Don't let your agricultural burn get out of hand

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