



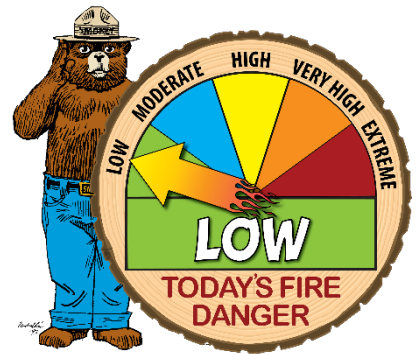
Date: September 5, 2023

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Fire Danger **LOW** in Missoula County – Outdoor Burning Remains Closed

Missoula, Montana – Cooler temperatures and precipitation received have prompted fire protection agencies to reduce the fire danger in Missoula County to **Low**, effective immediately. When fire danger is low, fuels do not ignite readily from small embers but will if a more intense heat source—such as lightning—occurs. Fires in open, dry grasslands may burn freely a few hours after rain, but wood fires spread slowly by creeping or smoldering.

“Low fire danger does not mean NO fire danger,” Kristin Mortenson, Fire Prevention Specialist with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation cautions, “A warming fire left to smolder or an illegal debris burn can still cause a wildfire. Please only burn when it is legal—which is not at this time in Missoula County—and make sure that your campfire is cold to the touch before you leave it.” With varying weather and fire conditions, the fire danger arrow can move up and down frequently, so it is important for the public to stay aware of current fire danger and do their part to reduce human caused wildfire starts. Forecasted weather calls for warmer temperatures and normal precipitation, so the arrow could easily move back up in the near future.



Outdoor burning is still closed in Missoula County. When it does open, please remember that the only burning that will be allowed will be essential agriculture and prescribed wildland, and that will be by permit only. **General Burning Season (burning of yard debris/untreated vegetative waste generated onsite) is closed until March 1, 2024.** 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. Inside the Missoula Air Stagnation Zone, it is illegal to burn piles of leaves and grass year-round. Visit www.MissoulaCounty.us/airquality or MCFPA.org for more information on outdoor burning seasons, permits, and current fire danger.

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