



NORTHWEST COLORADO FIRE MANAGEMENT UNIT

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## Learn before you burn

Moffat County, Colo. – It doesn't take long for fire danger to increase once snow begins to melt. Combine that with warm, windy conditions and brush and grass dry out quickly. A wind-whipped fire in quick-burning, dormant vegetation can cause a burn to easily become uncontrollable.

Federal and state land management agencies obtain weather forecasts from the National Weather Service before igniting any controlled burn....so should you! Your local National Weather Service office can be contacted 24 hours a day at 970-243-7007 or visit their website at [www.weather.gov/gjt](http://www.weather.gov/gjt) for fire weather forecasts.

Fire has been used as a land management tool for generations. It's used to clear land of debris and excess plant material, promote grass regeneration and replenish nutrients to the soil. While spring offers optimal burn conditions, dead vegetation can carry fire through green plants and pose control issues especially on windy days. Observing the following tips will provide a safer environment for debris and agricultural burning.

- **Contact the Moffat County Sheriff's Office before burning – 970-824-4495 or 970-824-6501**
- **Call the National Weather Service** at 970-243-7007 and get the predicted weather conditions for your burn day
- **Don't burn on windy days**
- **Notify your neighbors** of your plans to burn as a matter of safety and courtesy
- **Ready water and equipment** – have a reliable water source and have shovels, rakes and equipment on hand
- **Establish fire breaks** – create fire lines by digging to bare dirt and removing flammable material
- **Try to burn into the wind** as this will slow the rate of spread and makes the fire easier to manage
- **Stay with the fire at all times** - NEVER leave a fire unattended
- **Have plenty of help** – more people more control
- **Ensure the fire is out cold** before leaving the area, smoldering embers have ignited unattended fires

- **Call 911 if fire burns out of control** – the longer you wait the bigger the fire becomes before help arrives

**Remember: Your fire is your responsibility**

Should an agricultural or debris fire damage other private, state or federally managed lands, you could receive a fine or be held responsible for the cost of the damage and impacts.

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