

FIRE NEWS



303 East Aztec Drive • Lewistown, Montana 59457 • (406) 538-1072
<http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/prog/fireaviation.html>

Lewistown Interagency
Dispatch Center

Lewistown Interagency Dispatch Center External Media Guide

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Online Resources

❖ Internet Addresses:

- Lewistown Interagency Dispatch Center: http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/lewistown_field_office/dispatch.html
- Northern Rockies Coordination Center: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/>
- National Interagency Fire Center: <http://www.nifc.gov>
- National Interagency Coordination Center: <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/>
- InciWeb: <http://inciweb.nwcc.gov>
- WildWeb: <http://www.wildcad.net/WCMT-LIDC.htm>
- Area Fire Restrictions: <http://firerestrictions.us/mt/lewistown-area/>

❖ Social Media:

- Follow us on Twitter @BLM_MTDK_Fire
- Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BLMMontana>

Key Agency Contact Information

Bureau of Land Management

- Jonathan Moor, Public Information Officer, w:(406) 538-1943 c:(406)366-9274 (Lewistown)
- Karly DeMars, Fire Information Officer, (406) 538-1991 or (406) 350-0218 (Lewistown)
- Shannon Bonney, Backup Fire Information Officer, (406) 538-1072 (Lewistown)
- Brad Purdy, Public Information Officer, (406) 896-5258 (Billings)
- Al Nash, Public Information Officer, (406) 896-5260 (Billings)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Mike Granger, Fire Management Officer, (406) 535-2800 x 15 (Lewistown)
- Jim Forsythe, Asst. Fire Management Officer, (406) 654-2863 x 225 (Malta)

U.S. Forest Service

- Dave Cunningham, Public Information Officer, (406) 791-7754 (Great Falls)

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

- John Grassy, Public Information Officer, (406) 444-0465 (Helena)
- Crystal Beckman, Public Information Officer, (406) 542-4251 (Missoula)
- Clive Rooney, Area Manager – Northeastern Land Office, (406) 538-7789 (Lewistown)
- Don Pyrah, Fire Program Manager – Northeastern Land Office, (406) 538-7789 (Lewistown)

Other Regional Contacts:

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

- Eastern Land Office (Miles City)
 - Chris Pileski, Area Manager, (406) 232-2034
 - John Raisler, Rural Fire Specialist, (406) 233-2949
- Southern Land Office (Billings)
 - Matt Wolcott, Area Manager, (406) 247-4401
 - Derek Yeager, Program Manager, (406) 247-4406

Bureau of Land Management

- (Vacant), Fire Information Officer, (406) 896-2836 (Billings)
- (Vacant), Fire Information Officer, (406) 896-5201 (Billings)

Policy and Guidelines

General Policy:

- It is the policy of federal and state agencies to provide news media access to incidents including wildfires and prescribed fires.
- Federal and state agencies are required to provide equitable and maximum news media access to wildfire incidents.
- While the wildland firefighting agencies seek to provide safe access to incidents for news media representatives, the **ultimate responsibility for their safety lies with the individual reporter and their employer.**

Access to an Incident:

- Visits to the fireline must receive the approval of the Incident Commander or designated representative.
- News media representatives will be escorted by qualified fire management personnel, such as the lead Public Information Officer, Fire Information Officer, or appropriate local authority.
- To schedule a visit to an incident, first contact the local Public Information Officer w:(406) 538-1943 c:(406)366-9274 or Lewistown Fire Dispatch at (406) 538-1072. The local Public Information Officer will help coordinate with the appropriate management agency under which the fires jurisdiction lies. Additionally, with advance notice he/she will be better able to set up interviews and determine the best areas for photos/filming. The Public Information Officer can also tell you how to get to the incident and arrange for your escort. **Media and visitors will need an escort at all times, while at a fire.**

- When a large incident occurs and an incident management team is in place, a public information officer assigned to the team will take over the responsibilities of keeping the media and public informed. Large incident information can be found at InciWeb (<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/>)

Safety:

- **While visiting the incident, visitors must be escorted at all times.** Visitors must wear fire-resistant clothing (Nomex ®) when at the fire. With advance notice, the public information officer may arrange for a loaner Nomex ® shirt and pants, along with a hard hat, leather gloves, and fire shelter. You must provide your own eight-inch leather boots with Vibram ® soles. Natural fiber clothing is recommended for wear under the Nomex ®.

How to Contact People at Different Levels:

When a major incident (e.g., wildfire, flood) occurs in Central Montana, a group of experts, called an “**incident management team**,” is dispatched to the incident. The appropriate agency’s public affairs/public information officer can put you in touch with the team’s information officer. Once the incident management team is in place, the public information officer will begin setting up the information center. The **public information officer** is your point of contact about the incident. The public information officer’s job is to develop complete and accurate information about the cause, size, status, people, and equipment involved, as well as the respond to other matters of general interest.

In summary, there are usually three contact points during the evolution of a major incident:

- **Local Public Affairs/Public Information Officer:** This person is your contact before the incident management team is in place. This person is usually located in the office of whichever land agency is initially responsible for the incident (Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, etc.)
- **Public Information Officer:** Once the incident management team is in place, this person can usually be reached in person or by phone at the incident command post.
- **Multiple Agency Coordination:** Multiple incidents in the same vicinity are called a “complex” and a **multiple agency coordination group (MAC)** may be established with additional information officers working in a common location for all incidents. This group will be the focal point for media contact during the multiple incidents and will most likely be located at the Lewistown Interagency Dispatch Center.

Services You Can Expect:

If you want to visit the incident, the public information officer will coordinate that visit and provide you with an escort. They will orient you to the facilities and help by providing:

- Access to incident management team members for interviews
- Maps, incident action plans, special interest items, general information
- Contacts or coordination with law enforcement or security personnel
- Sanitation facilities and wash area
- With advance notice: protective clothing to enable you to visit the fire line

Glossary