

MILES CITY INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER MEDIA GUIDE

General Policy

It is the policy of federal and state agencies to provide news media access to incidents which include wildland fires, prescribed fires and wildland fire-use fires. Miles City Interagency Dispatch Center (MCC) will follow the guidelines set out in the National Interagency Media Guidelines for Wildland Fires.

This document contains specifics to the Eastern Montana Fire Zone.

Guidelines

During the fire season initial attack fire activity will be reported through WildWeb. When a large incident occurs and a team is in place, a Fire Information Officer assigned to the team will take over the responsibilities of keeping the media and public informed.

Access to Incident

To visit an incident, call MCC or the incident contacts to arrange with the incident Information Officer access and escort to the incident. With advance notice, the Information Officer can set up interviews and determine the best areas for photos. While visiting an incident, your escort will be with you at all times.

News media aviation resources must determine and abide by airspace restrictions that may be implemented by the FAA at the request of fire managers.

Denial of Access

Denial of access to fire camp, the fireline or other related areas will be a rare occurrence. News media access may be limited when the Incident Commander determines that safety will be compromised; presence may compromise incident operations, compromise the integrity of an investigation, or a violation of security or privacy.

Federal and state agencies will support decisions regarding access by other jurisdictions, such as a private landowner, tribal entity, or local law enforcement agency, or when the local law enforcement agency closes an area for/during evacuation purposes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

News media will be required to wear PPE as outlined in the Fireline Handbook and Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (the “Red Book”) when working within the fire perimeter and have an appropriate safety briefing. PPE may be provided by MCC or the incident if media representatives are unprepared.

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