

Vermont Department of Public Safety

May 1, 2015

10:00 a.m.

Contacts: Below

Open Burning and Weather Awareness in Vermont

WATERBURY – As Vermont dries out from winter each year, a new hazard often presents itself for spring. Dead grass, leaves, and brush can become prime fuel for wildland and brushfires, particularly when dried out under sunshine, low relative humidity, and just two or three rain free days in a row. The National Weather Service reports those conditions are expected this coming weekend.

The National Weather Service; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation; Green Mountain National Forest; and Vermont Department of Public Safety remind the public to exercise caution and follow local ordinances in regards to open burning this weekend and this time of year in general.

Mid to late spring is considered the peak fire season in Vermont, with 75% of all fires during a given year typically occurring in April and May. Open burns can get out of control quickly in dry conditions like Vermont is seeing now, and it becomes even more hazardous if winds are blowing.

Fire officials with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation and the Green Mountain National Forest urge people to be aware of this danger and take steps to prevent wildland fires from starting in the first place. The majority of wildland fires in Vermont are a result of escaped fires from open burning by homeowners.

All open burning must have a Permit to Kindle Fire from the town Forest Fire Warden. The Fire Warden has the right to restrict open burning when fuels and weather conditions may enhance the potential for wildfires. In addition to obtaining a burn permit, you should also clear the area around a pile of all flammable material, never leave the fire unattended, have a hose and tools such as a shovel or rake on hand, burn only natural vegetative material, and call 911 immediately if the fire gets out of control.

Wildfires burn more than just trees and Smokey Bear's reminder that "only you can prevent wildfires" is very important this time of year across Vermont.

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