



West Virginia Division of Forestry
www.wvforestry.com
Earl Ray Tomblin, Governor
Randy Dye, Director/State Forester

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Fall forest fire season starts Saturday, Oct. 1 New burning hours, fines and permit fees

Charleston, W.Va. — West Virginia's fall forest fire season starts Oct. 1, 2011, and runs through Dec. 31, 2011. During these three months, daytime burning is prohibited from the hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outdoor burning is permitted only between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7 a.m.

State law requires a ring or safety strip around outdoor fires to keep the fire from spreading into the woods. This safety strip must be cleared of all burnable material and be at least 10-feet wide completely around the debris pile.

Additional requirements of the state's fire laws include staying on-site until the fire is completely extinguished, and only burning vegetative materials like leaves, brush and yard clippings.

The only daytime burning that is allowed during fire season is that done by public utilities and people burning in conjunction with commercial, manufacturing, mining or like activities. This type of commercial burning requires a burning permit that costs \$125 each and is issued by a local Division of Forestry office. A permit is required for each site where this type of burning is taking place.

Private landowners burning during the course of agricultural activities must have a permit to burn during the day, but are exempt from the \$125 permit fee. Burning permits are not issued for residential burning of small amounts of yard debris such as leaves, branches, or yard clippings.

If you allow a fire you have started to escape and it causes a wildfire or forest fire, you will be subject to fines ranging from \$100 to \$1,000. An additional civil penalty of \$200 also will be assessed against you.

These fines and penalties are part of legislation passed this year that also prohibits outdoor burning from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Regional Offices
Farmington 304-825-6983
Beckley 304-256-6775
Milton 304-743-6186



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Page 2

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The Division of Forestry offers these tips for safe outdoor burning:

- Burn only after 5 p.m. — it's the law — and put your fire out completely by 7 a.m.
- Put debris in several small piles instead of one large one
- Never burn on dry, windy days
- Select a safe place away from overhead power lines, phone lines or other obstructions and where the fire cannot spread into the woods or weedy or brushy areas
- Clear at least a 10-foot area around the fire and make sure the area is clear of all burnable material
- Have water and tools on hand to extinguish anything that may escape the burn area
- Be conscientious of neighbors and don't burn debris that produces a lot of smoke at times when smoke does not rise. If the smoke spreads out near the ground instead of rising, put out the fire and burn another time.
- Stay with the fire at all times until it is completely out. Leaving a fire unattended for any length of time is illegal.
- Call 911 immediately if a fire does escape

To find out more about West Virginia's burning laws and where you can obtain a burning permit, visit the Division of Forestry's website at www.wvforestry.com for the office nearest you.

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