



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

News Release: Feb. 25, 2011

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**SPRING FOREST FIRE SEASON STARTS MARCH 1
Outdoor burning restricted until after 4 p.m.**

Charleston, W.Va. – West Virginia’s spring forest fire season starts March 1 and runs through May 31. During the months of March, April and May, all outdoor burning is prohibited from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“Spring is a dangerous time for forest fires in West Virginia,” said Director/State Forester Randy Dye. “Warmer weather encourages people to get outside and clean up debris left behind from winter storms. With more people outside burning, the risk of forest fires increases.”

Residents may burn vegetative materials, including brush, leaves and limbs, but only after 4 p.m. Anyone who conducts outdoor burning must complete all burning before 7 a.m. and supervise all fires until they are completely extinguished.

Dye cautioned that winds are a major contributor to spreading debris fires into surrounding woods. “If conditions are windy please use common sense and refrain from burning until the winds have calmed.” Dye said that winds typically are calmer in the evening hours, and that is why burning is prohibited until after 4 p.m.

Forestry officials also suggest the following tips when burning debris:

- Create a 10-foot perimeter around the fire so that if it does get away from you it won’t spread too far.
- Keep a rake, shovel and water source nearby in case the fire does escape.
- If the fire breaks into the woods, call 911 immediately.

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Regional Offices
Farmington 304.825.6983
Beckley 304.256.6775
Milton 304.743.6186



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Penalties also may be assessed if a fire escapes and starts a forest fire. In the case of an escaped fire, the person who set it is liable for the costs of fighting the fire, and also may face a misdemeanor charge and a fine up to \$300. Landowners whose property is damaged by another person's fire may seek damages in civil court from the person who set the fire.

Since Jan. 1, 127 fires have burned 951 acres throughout West Virginia.

For more information about the state's outdoor burning laws and fire safety visit the Division of Forestry's website at www.wvforestry.com.

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