

Fire Managers Ask Public To Prevent Wildland Fires

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Federal and state fire managers in Central Oregon are asking hunters, and other public and private wildland visitors to take extra precautions to prevent wildfires this fall.

To date, 138 of the 450 fires reported this year to the Central Oregon Interagency Dispatch Center in Prineville were human-caused.

“Abandoned campfires are the leading cause of wildfires in the West,” said Tom Goheen, Deputy Fire Management Officer for the Deschutes National Forest. “We’re especially concerned about the fall season with so many folks heading out to hunt, camp and recreate. It’s easy to get fooled by the shorter days and cooler nights, but we have not had rain in quite some time.”

Central Oregon’s fire prevention experts encourage people who recreate on private or public lands to learn current fire regulations and never leave a fire unattended.

Basic campfire rules include:

Using existing fire rings or pits in a safe place, and only where campfires are permitted. Keep the fire small.

Clearing the area around a campfire and removing all vegetation and debris from within 10 feet before you start the fire.

Ensuring you have a bucket of water, shovel and other tools nearby in case your campfire starts to get out of control.

Making sure the campfire is "dead out" before leaving. Stir water and dirt into the coals with a shovel or stick until coals are cool enough to touch with the back of the hand.

Being careful with cigarettes, lanterns, barbecues, gas stoves and anything else at campsites that can be a source of ignition for a wildfire. Check agency websites for areas you plan to visit to learn current restrictions.

For fire restrictions in the Pacific Northwest, log onto: www.or.blm.gov/pnwfire

Fire restrictions for Central Oregon wildlands can be found at:
www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/fire/fire-info.htm