



ROUTT COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DRAFT MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: July 10, 2007

Time: 1130 Hours

ROUTT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ENACT FIRE RESTRICTIONS

Routt County, Colorado – **THE ROUTT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HAVE INITIATED A COUNTYWIDE FIRE RESTRICTION PER ORDINANCE 99-1 EFFECTIVE AT 12:01 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2007.**

Fire danger has increased to “very high” in Routt County. The elevated risk of forest fires is rated very high meaning a fire can be sparked easily and spread rapidly. Fire restrictions are considered only when very high or extreme fire danger is predicted to persist. This determination is based upon current conditions, long-term weather forecasts, and upon the heavy, dry fuel loading which creates the potential for uncontrollable fires.

Wildfires can affect entire communities by destroying homes and natural habitat and by killing wildlife. People must take all necessary safety precautions in wildlands and forests. According to Routt County Commissioner Nancy Stahoviak, “we put these restrictions in place to reduce the likelihood of human-caused fires.” The restrictions will remain in effect until officials determine that conditions have changed sufficiently to reduce the risk of a human-caused wildfire. Rescinding the restrictions will be considered when the critical elements diminish.

The fire restriction applies to all private and state owned lands outside municipal boundaries. There may also be restrictions within city/town and federal lands. Please call the Routt County Sheriff’s Office, your local fire department, or public land management agency for more information on fire restrictions and fire safety.

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SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES RESTRICTED INCLUDE:

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using any fire to burn trash, debris, fencerows or vegetation, any campfire, warming fire, charcoal grill, except in designated campgrounds, picnic areas or developed recreational sites.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area of at least three (3) feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
3. Operating a chainsaw without a USDA or SAE approved spark arresting device properly installed and in effective working order, and chemical pressurized fire extinguisher of not less than eight (8) ounces capacity by weight, and one (1) round pointed shovel with an overall length of at least 36 inches. The extinguisher shall be with the chainsaw operator. The shovel may be kept with the fueling supplies but readily available for quick use.
4. Welding or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame, except within an area that is barren or cleared of all flammable material at least 10 feet on all sides from the equipment.
5. Using explosives requiring fuse-blasting caps.

EXEMPTIONS FROM FIRE RESTRICTION INCLUDE:

1. Persons with a valid written permit from the jurisdictional federal agency or the Routt County Sheriff and which specifically authorize the prohibited act. **NOTE: Any permit issued by a fire protection district within Routt County prior to the inaction of these fire restrictions is null and void until the restrictions are lifted by the Routt County Commissioners.**
2. Any federal, state, or local office or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of official duty.
3. Any fires contained within liquid-fueled or gas fueled stoves, fireplaces within buildings, charcoal grill fires at private residences, and permanent fire pits or fire grates located in developed picnic grounds and campgrounds.
4. Burning of irrigation ditches located within and completely surrounded by irrigated farmlands where such burning is necessary for crop survival and the Routt County Sheriff has granted specific written permit in advance.

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THIS ORDER BECOMES EFFECTIVE AT 12:01 A.M. ON JULY 11, 2007 AND WILL REMAIN IN FORCE UNTIL RESCINDED BY THE ROUTT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

Should you have any questions, please call the Routt County Sheriff's Office at (970) 879-1090 or the Routt County Office of Emergency Management at (970) 870-5551. Thank you for your cooperation.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT CHUCK VALE AT (970) 870-5551
OR VISIT RCOEM'S WEB SITE AT WWW.CO.ROUTT.CO.US/EMERGENCY.