

Independence Day is for freedom, fun – not forest fires

July 1, 2022



Independence Day should be a holiday marked by freedom and fun – not forest fires.

Forest Service officials in the Pacific Northwest are asking everyone to celebrate safely and make fire safety a part of your weekend's festivities.

Fireworks – Don't use them near anything flammable, including grasses, garages, and even shrubs. All explosives and pyrotechnic devices, including fireworks and explosive targets, are prohibited on National Forests in Oregon and Washington. Violators who bring fireworks onto national forests and grasslands can be fined up to \$5,000 and sentenced with up to six months in jail (36 CFR 261.52) and may be liable for suppression costs and property damage.

Recreation Risks – Summer has arrived in the Pacific Northwest, and potential forest fire fuels are drying rapidly in most locations. Before visiting public lands, check what the overall fire danger level is at, and what public use restrictions are in effect. If cooking outdoors, use a fuel stove with an on/off switch to prepare hot meals. If campfires are permitted, keep coals inside a steel container or fire ring. Never leave a

fire unattended! To extinguish a campfire, stir water into the ashes and break up any coals until the ground feels cold.

Motorized Equipment & Vehicle Safety – If you’re towing equipment or a trailer, make sure tow chains aren’t dragging where they can strike pavement or rocks, which can cause sparks. If you smoke, find a vegetation-free area or stay inside your car – and never toss lit cigarettes from your vehicle. Park on vegetation-free surfaces – the hot undercarriage of your car can set dry grass on fire. Bring a fire extinguisher or several gallons of water when travelling in remote areas. Before using motorized equipment, such as chainsaws, dirt-bikes or off-road vehicles, where allowed test spark arrestors to ensure they are working. Remember that in an emergency, first responders and their vehicles will need immediate access – do not block forest roads!

A final few tips – Whether you’re camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, boating, or riding on National Forests this weekend, remember that fires can start anywhere, at any time. Make sure you have the [10 Outdoor Essentials](#) on hand, and have a plan for what to do if disaster strikes.

Thank you for helping keep our forests free from wildfires!.