



Date: July 20, 2004  
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Conditions are right for wildland fires.

As a precaution, Stage 1 fire restrictions are now in place on private, state and Bureau of Land Management lands in Stillwater, Musselshell, Sweet Grass and Treasure counties.

Under Stage 1, fires are prohibited except within developed recreation sites, and smoking is allowed only in areas cleared of flammable materials. Exemptions include fires fueled solely by liquid petroleum or LPG, or other activities for which there is a permit or written authorization.

**An exemption does not absolve an individual or organization from liability or responsibility for any fire started by the exempted activity.**

During the past week, three fires have burned more than 2,000 acres in central and eastern Montana. Please take extra caution when working and recreating outdoors to help prevent more wildland fire starts. **Anyone who causes a wildland fire intentionally or through negligence may be held accountable for damage and suppression costs.**

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Even in areas not under Stage 1 restrictions, a permit is required for any open burning other than campfires. Additional restrictions may also exist in certain areas. Before burning such things as slash piles, ditches, or fields, please contact your local fire department or sheriff's office for more information and to obtain any necessary permits.

As you work and play outdoors this summer, remember what Smokey Bear says: "Only you can prevent wildfires." We mark Smokey's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2004 and ask for your continued help in preventing wildfires.

For more information about fire prevention, please contact the Custer National Forest at 406-657-6200; Bureau of Land Management at 406-896-5013; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation at 406-247-4400; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-247-2940; Carbon County at 406-446-1595; Stillwater County at 406-321-0204; or your local fire department or sheriff's office.

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