

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2025

Stage 1 fire restrictions starting Friday, February 28th at 8:00 a.m.

Holbrook, AZ – On Tuesday, February 25th, the voting members of the White Mountain Fire Coordinating Group (WMFCG) convened to assess current forest conditions and weather patterns throughout the region. The members voted to recommend the enactment of Stage 1 fire restrictions in the unincorporated areas of Apache and Navajo Counties on **Friday, February 28th, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.** Several other agencies, including the USFS Apache-Sitgreaves Forests, Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management, and select municipalities, will also implement similar restrictions.

While the restrictions are largely consistent across the region, some variations may apply depending on the jurisdiction. These restrictions apply to all individuals, including full-time residents, part-time residents, and visitors, therefore it is up to each individual to know the rules. Information and updates can be found under the Fire Restriction tab at www.311info.net.

Under Stage 1 Fire Restrictions The following acts are prohibited until further notice:

1. Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire (unless noted in the exemptions below).
2. Smoking outside of designated areas.
3. Use of **any** and all fireworks.
4. Use of explosive targets.
5. Use of tracer round ammunition.

Exemptions:

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

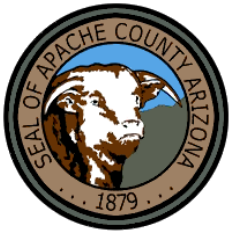
During Stage 1, the following acts are prohibited at all times unless an exemption is listed:

1. Igniting, building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire fueled by combustible materials such as wood, charcoal, briquettes, and/or coal.

Exemption: Fires fueled by combustible materials, such as wood, wood pellet smokers, charcoal, briquette, and/or coal, used only for the cooking of food or for providing warmth for human beings or for recreational purposes (campfires and charcoal fires) must be in Developed Site, as defined above.

Exemption: Use of the following items are permitted: propane fire rings, pellet stoves/smokers/grills that have UL or FM approval and are a contained unit. A person of appropriate age must always maintain a presence when in operation.

2. Smoking outdoors.



Exemption: Smoking within an enclosed vehicle is allowed. Smoking may also be allowed in or on porches, carports, garages, parking lots and other areas or properties which are cleared of all combustible materials so long as the smoking does not create a substantial risk of fire. All smoking materials must be and properly extinguished and disposed of in an appropriate manner. At no time is it allowed to discard lit cigarettes, cigars, or other smoking materials from a vehicle, or from ones' possession in a public place. ARS 13-1603.a.1

3. Use of all consumer fireworks.

Exemption: None

4. Use of explosive targets, tracer rounds, and/or incendiary ammunition.

Exemption: None

Additional Exemptions During Stage 1:

- a) Persons obtaining a written "Special Use Permit" from the "Authority Having Jurisdiction" that specifically authorizes the otherwise prohibited act.
- b) Emergency repair of public utilities and railroads as per attached conditions.
- c) Any Federal, State, or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.
- d) Other exemptions unique to each "Authority Having Jurisdiction".

****** An exemption does not absolve an individual or organization from liability or responsibility for any fire started by the exempted activity. A person who commits an act in violation of this chapter that results in an appropriate emergency response or investigation and who is convicted of the violation may be liable for the expenses that are incurred incident to the emergency response and the investigation of the commission of the offense in accordance with *Arizona Revised Statute 13-1709; Emergency response and investigation costs; civil liability.*

In light of the devastating wildfires experienced in California this year, we cannot stress enough that "preparedness is empowerment," said Catrina Jenkins, Navajo County Emergency Manager. This includes creating defensible space on your property, hardening your home, gathering your important documents and placing them in one grab and go container, such as your Go Kit, or having them stored on a password protected flash drive or in the Cloud.

Assistance from emergency personnel may not always be immediately available during a disaster, therefore it is critical for all residents, especially seniors and those with disabilities, to have a plan in place for protecting themselves, their families, and their pets.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ready.gov/>

"One less spark, means one less wildfire!"

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