



Douglas County Fire District No. 2

Proudly providing Fire & EMS services to the Land of Umpqua since 1952.

FIRE DANGER RATING LEVEL

Fire danger levels (low, moderate, high, and extreme) are used to show the overall danger for a brush fire or wild fire to occur at a given time of the year. Fire danger levels are posted on signs outside many fire departments and protection agencies. Also, when fire danger level changes occur, details are usually published in local newspapers, and announced on television and radio news bulletins a day or two before the change. Fire danger levels have a direct impact on the public use restrictions of forestlands and commercial operations in wild land areas.

PUBLIC USE RESTRICTION

Fire protection agencies sometimes have to restrict public access to forested areas in order to prevent human-caused fires. Public forest use restrictions limit the activities of the general public. In the case of DFPA, closures affect all state, private, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands within the Douglas District of the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). There are three levels of public use restrictions:

Regulated Use Closure

The extent of the provisions of the regulated use closure is determined by the DFPA's District Manager. Regulated use closures do not affect where people can go but do affect what they can do. Affected lands are marked with signs reading (REGULATED USE AREA) along with instructions and prevention reminders. The following is a complete list of restrictions within the regulated use closure:

- Smoking is prohibited while traveling through wild land areas, except in vehicles on improved roads kept clear of grass and other combustible debris.
- Open fires are prohibited. Campfires and charcoal, cooking and warming fires must be in designated areas (campgrounds) with fire rings. Portable cooking stoves using liquefied or bottled fuels are allowed.
- Chainsaw use is prohibited between 01:00 p.m. and 08:00 p.m. in areas subject to Industrial Fire Precaution Levels 1 and 2. Chainsaw use is permitted at all other hours if the following firefighting equipment is present with each operating saw: one axe; one shovel; and one operational 8 ounce or larger fire extinguisher. In addition, a fire watch is required for at least one hour following the use of each saw.

- Chainsaw use is prohibited in areas subject to Industrial Fire Precaution Levels 3 and 4.
- The use of motor vehicles, including motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), is prohibited, except on improved roads and for agricultural purposes.
- While traveling in wild land areas, each vehicle must have at least one axe, one shovel and one gallon of water or fully charged and operational 2.5 pound or larger fire extinguisher. ATV's and motorcycles must be equipped with one operational 2.5 pound or larger ABC type fire extinguisher, except when traveling on state and county roads.
- The use of fireworks is prohibited.
- The cutting, grinding and welding of metal in dry, grassy or forested areas is prohibited between 10:00 a.m. and 08:00 p.m.
- The use of exploding targets is also prohibited\
- The mowing of dried and cured grass with power driven equipment is prohibited between 10:00 a.m. and 08:00 p.m., except for agricultural purposes.

Permit Closure

Permit closures require people, including landowners, to obtain permits before entering wild land areas of an agency's protection district. Permits, which may be issued by DFPA's foresters and wardens, will contain prevention requirements that the permit holder must follow. The District Manager may during times of high fire danger; refuse to issue permits or may restrict, suspend or revoke those already issued. Permit-entry lands are marked with signs reading (STOP Forest Area CLOSED TO ENTRY Except by Permit).

To further enhance the safety of the residents of the District, the following restrictions are in effect under the permit closure:

- The use of lawn mowers is restricted to well-manicured and watered lawns only.
- The use of lawn mowers in areas other than those referenced in the paragraph above, chain saws, and other power driven equipment is prohibited until further notice.

Absolute Closure

Absolute Closure means exactly what it says; such closure restricts all forms of use within a designated area. All forms of travel and all recreational activities are prohibited in wild land areas under Absolute Closure. These closures may only be announced during extreme fire

danger, when the District Manager determines that danger to life and property is so high that human activity in the forests is too risky. Conditions rarely warrant an absolute closure.

- Under this level of closure the use of lawn mowers, chain saws, and other power driven equipment is prohibited until further notice.

INDUSTRIAL FIRE PRECAUTION LEVELS

Commercial operations in wild land areas are regulated by the Industrial Fire Precaution Level during fire season. Protection agencies announce increases in the level as fire danger rises. Each of the four levels is more restrictive than the previous.

Level I – Closed Season

This level takes effect at the start of fire season. Fire precaution requirements are in effect. Smoking is prohibited while working on or traveling through any logging operation. Specified fire tools and suppression equipment must be maintained at all logging operations. A Fire Watch/Security is required at all logging sites at this and all higher levels unless otherwise waived.

Level II – Partial Hootowl

The following may operate only between 08:00 p.m. and 01:00 p. m.:

- Power saws except at loading sites
- Cable yarding
- Blasting
- Welding or cutting of metal

Level III – Partial Shutdown

The following are prohibited except as indicated:

- Cable yarding - except that gravity operated logging systems employing non-motorized carriages may operate between 08:00 p.m. and 01:00 p.m. when all blocks and moving lines are suspended 10 feet above the ground except the line between the carriage and chokers.
- Power saws – except that power saws may be used at loading sites and on tractor/skidder operations between the hours of 08:00 p.m. and 01:00 p.m.

In addition, the following are permitted to operate between the hours of 08:00 p.m. and 01:00 p.m.:

- Tractor/skidder, feller-buncher, forwarder, or shovel logging operations where tractors, skidders or other equipment with a blade capable of constructing fire line are immediately available to quickly reach and effectively attack a fire start.
- Mechanized loading or hauling of any product or material
- Blasting
- Welding or cutting of metal
- Any other spark-emitting operation not specifically mentioned

Level IV – General Shutdown

All operations are prohibited.

Note: Where hauling involves transit through more than one shutdown/regulated use area, the precaution level at the woods loading site shall govern the level of haul restriction, unless otherwise prohibited by other than the industrial precaution level system.