

May 3, 2013

Warmer Weather Prompts Potential Early Fire Season

Dear Landowner or Operator,

We have had drier than normal conditions in the past several weeks and a few fire incidents have occurred that has prompted this mailing. Warm weather is drying out the fuels quickly and winds have been unpredictable. We are currently anticipating an early fire season. It would be good to get your fire equipment ready as it will be required when you are actively working in the woods once fire season is declared. At that time, you will need an assigned watchman as well.

(Fire equipment Self inspection form enclosed).

Check all burn piles, burn piles can smolder for several months, even though there may not be any visible smoke or flame. As the weather gets warmer and drier, piles become more active. With a little wind, fire can spread from the pile to the surrounding land. Lately we have had fires from hold-over pile burns which have burned several acres of valuable timber and other resources. In addition, these fires have cost the landowners and the Department of Forestry hundreds to thousands of dollars to extinguish. **It is very important that you make sure your burn piles are completely extinguished.**

If you have done any pile burning this past season, **please physically check** those piles as soon as possible for hold-over heat. Use a shovel or other equipment to dig down through the ashes until you hit the soil underneath. Touch the burned fuels and soil. If they are warm to the touch this is a sign that material is still burning.

If you find piles that are still burning, **completely extinguish the pile(s)**. You must dig a three foot wide line to mineral soil around the pile(s), dig up and spread any remaining fuel inside the line. Piles found burning during fire season may be declared an uncontrolled fire (ORS 477.064) and the landowner or operator may be held liable for the cost of extinguishing the fire (ORS 477.068). If you find some smoldering piles and are having difficulty extinguishing them, please give us a call as we would be happy to help prior to them starting a wildfire.

If you have any questions or need other assistance, please contact Randall Baley, Klamath, (541) 883-5681 or by email to RBaley@odf.state.or.us or Dustin Gustaveson, Lakeview, (541) 947-3311 or by email to DGustaveson@odf.state.or.us

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Greg Pittman
District Forester

FIRE EQUIPMENT SELF-INSPECTION FORM

Oregon Department of Forestry, Klamath/Lake District
Walker Range Patrol Association

FOR EACH OPERATION AREA

- [] **HAND TOOLS** - Provide at least 1 tool per person with a minimum of 4 tools per operation area. Tools are to be kept in good repair for firefighting only and stored in a TOOL BOX clearly identified as containing firefighting tools. In general, there should be an equal mix of cutting tools (axe or Pulaski) to digging tools (shovel, hazel hoe, or Pulaski). Tool table located on back page.
- [] **WATCHMAN SERVICE** -
 - 1) Watchman shall be on duty for 3 hours after the power driven machinery used by the operator has been shut down for the day or that period of time designated by the forester. For KLD and WRPA: Low - 1 hr., Moderate - 2 hr., High/Extreme - 3 hr.
 - 2) Watchman shall visually observe all portions of the operation area on which operation activity has occurred during the day.
 - 3) Watchman shall be physically capable and experienced to operate firefighting equipment.
 - 4) Watchman shall have adequate facilities for transportation and communications in order to be able to summon assistance.
- [] **WATER SUPPLY AND DELIVERY EQUIPMENT** - Provide a water supply and water delivery equipment, kept ready for immediate use, at each operation area where power driven machinery (except hand held power saw) is used.
 - 1) Water supply shall be a self-propelled motor vehicle with at least 300 gallons, or at least 500 gallons if not self-propelled.
 - 2) Pump capable of discharging not less than 20 gallons/minute when pumping through 50' of hose and a 1/4" nozzle at pump level.
 - 3) Provide at least 500' of hose not less than 3/4" inside diameter and a nozzle.
 - 4) Water supply, pump, at least 250' hose, and nozzle shall be maintained as a connected, operating unit ready for immediate use.

FOR EACH INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE INVOLVED WITH AN OPERATION (includes trucks)

- [] **SPARK ARRESTERS / EXHAUST SYSTEMS** - All internal combustion engines shall be equipped and maintained with a spark arrester in good working condition, and that is listed in the most recent edition of the NWCG publication entitled "Spark Arrester Guide", except:
 - 1) Fully turbo-charged engines which are maintained in good operating condition;
 - 2) Engines in motor vehicles operating on public roads equipped with a muffler and exhaust system;
 - 3) Water pumping equipment used exclusively for firefighting (trucks hauling equipment are not exempt);
 - 4) Engines, except ATV and motorcycle, of 50 cubic inch displacement or less equipped with muffler and exhaust system;
 - 5) Engines in heavy trucks equipped with a muffler and exhaust system, which extend at least to the end of the truck frame and discharge to the rear; or extends above the cab of the truck and discharges upward or to rear.
 - 6) Engines in ATV's and motorcycles which are equipped with a muffler and a exhaust system; or a screen which encloses exhaust system and is resistant to heat and corrosion, openings less than .023".
- [] **EXTINGUISHERS** - Each internal combustion engine, except power saws, shall be equipped with one 2½ pound size A, B, C rated fire extinguisher approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory kept ready for immediate use.
*Two 2 ½ lb fire extinguishers will be equivalent for the 5lb ABC fire extinguisher required by OR-OSHA

FOR EACH TRUCK (includes pick-up trucks)

- [] **FIRE TOOLS AND EXTINGUISHERS**
 - 1) At least one round point shovel which has a face not less than 8" wide and a handle not less than 26" long; and
 - 2) At least one pulaski or axe which has a handle not less than 26" long; and
 - 3) At least one 2½ pound size A, B, C rated fire extinguisher approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
* Two 2 ½ lb fire extinguishers will be equivalent for the 5 lb ABC fire extinguisher required by OR-OSHA

POWER SAWS (hand held)

- [] **EXHAUST SYSTEMS** - Each power saw must be equipped and maintained with a spark arrester and other fire prevention equipment that is listed in the most recent edition of the NWCG publication entitled "Spark Arrester Guide". Generally a non-modified saw with an adequate exhaust screen will meet these specifications.
- [] **TOOLS AND EXTINGUISHERS** – kept immediately available.
 - 1) At least one round point shovel which has a face not less than 8" wide and a handle not less than 26" long; and
 - 2) A fire extinguisher of at least 8 oz. capacity.
 - 3) The power saw must stopped during fueling and moved at least 20' from the place of fueling before it is started.

FOR CABLE YARDING OPERATIONS

- [] **LOGGING LINES** - Do not permit moving lines to rub on rock or woody material in such a way to cause sparks or sufficient heat that may cause ignition of fire.
- [] **BLOCKS** – For each block that guides a moving line :
 - 1) Clear ground of all flammable debris for not less than 10' slope distance from point directly below block; and
 - 1) Provide at least one pump equipped can or bladder containing not less than 5 gallons of water; and
 - 2) Provide at least one round point shovel, which has a face not less than 6-8" wide, and a handle not less than 26" long.

WAIVERS - The forester may reduce or waive, in written order, these requirements if conditions so warrant or to take advantage of alternate methods or equipment proposed by the operator which provide equal or better prevention or suppression of fire.

Required Firefighting Hand Tools

Persons in operation	1 - 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Tool Box	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Axes or Pulaskis	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
Shovels	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	7	7	7	7	7
Hazel Hoes or Pulaskis	1	2	3	3	4	5	5	5	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	9	10

Required firefighting tools may be used only for firefighting and must be kept ready for immediate use.

Store all required firefighting hand tools in a clearly identified tool box.