



**Central Oregon District, John Day Unit – News Release
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Immediate Release**

CONDUCT SPRING BURNING SAFELY AND WISELY

Statistics reported by the Oregon Department of Forestry and Keep Oregon Green Association (KOG) show that debris burning is the leading cause of human-started wildfires in Oregon. A lesser-known fact is that debris burning also causes more than half the injuries treated by the Oregon Burn Center. In the interest of both public safety and natural resource protection, ODF is urging landowners to exercise extreme caution when conducting spring burning activities. “Springtime is when everyone is in the mood for spring cleanup. Burning is one of the tools landowners use to clean up debris,” said Angie Johnson, Unit Forester of John Day Unit. “However, it is advised that we all work together to make sure it is done safely.”

Adherence to the following will ensure safe burning practices:

- 1) Obtain the proper burning permit from Oregon Department of Forestry or your local fire department. Burning of machine-piled logging slash is not allowed.
- 2) Avoid burning on windy days; ideally, burn right before rain is expected.
- 3) Make sure burning is monitored at all times and have adequate hand tools and water on hand to prevent escape.
- 4) Monitor burning at all times.
- 5) Ensure that all debris piles are dead out before leaving unattended.
- 6) Burning without a permit is unlawful, and if escape happens, can result in liability for fire suppression cost.

Large piles of logging slash are of particular concern this time of year. Piles containing dirt and debris can hold fire for months, smoldering until hot, dry and windy conditions rekindle them and cause early wildfires. Landowners are held responsible for fire cost when this happens. Please make sure any burning of slash that took place during the fall and winter months is dead out.

For more information, please contact Oregon Department of Forestry – John Day Unit, at (541) 575-1139.

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