

We are now soliciting comments from the public on this guidance. Once the 21 day notice period is complete, all comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders. Comments related to this draft guidance document should be sent to: Michele.Witecha@Wisconsin.gov

Handbook #: 4325.1

Subject: Chapter 2 – Prevention

Manual Code Owner: Trent Marty

Fire Management: This handbook applies to all DNR employees with fire management responsibilities and/or such oversight and their respective supervisors. This handbook was established primarily to ensure statewide consistencies and to develop a system utilizing knowledgeable staff to make decisions regarding fire management/wildfire suppression. This handbook is an update to handbook #4325.1 and will rescind and replace the existing Fire Management Handbook. The handbook was revisited and updated by the Bureau of Forest Protection and the notable changes/updates are as follows:

- Updated statewide regulations on Open Burning (campfire, debris, broadcast, etc.) and Prevention Inspection protocol.
- Updated policy on Railroad Fire Prevention
- Red Flag Warning policy updated
- Updated policy on Enforcement of Burn Permits
- Updated Media Relations policy
- Updated Fire Prevention Awards section
- Updated policy on Emergency Fire Wardens

CHAPTER 2: PREVENTION

ADMINISTRATION

The protection of Wisconsin forest and wildland areas from destructive fires is a principal assignment of the Natural Resources Board. The fire management program in the Department of Natural Resources has been established and maintained for that purpose. The responsibilities of forest fire management include prevention, detection and suppression of fires. Enforcement of fire regulations is an integral part of the fire prevention program. Actions taken to educate on and enforce the fire laws are carefully planned to maximize their effects as a fire prevention measure.

Objective

The objective of the fire prevention program is to reduce the losses associated with wildfires through education, engineering, and enforcement.

Fire Statistics

Annual statistics related to fire numbers and their causes will be produced by the Bureau of Forest Protection.

Prevention Contacts

Any specific questions, concerns, or ideas in regards to fire prevention or Firewise-related issues should be addressed to the Wildfire Prevention Specialist, the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Coordinator, or WUI Specialists.

Questions, comments, or concerns related to fire prevention and forest education can also be voiced to a member of the Fire Prevention Specialist Team or the Forest Education Leadership Team.

ENGINEERING

Statewide Laws and Regulations

For a breakdown of how materials are handled (i.e. landfill, recycle, or burn), visit:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/environmentprotect.html>.

Alternatives to Burning

1. Reduce usage – buy in bulk or larger quantities and demand less packaging on the products you buy.
2. Reuse items – use cloth grocery bags, donate unwanted items to charity or sell them at a yard sale.
3. Recycle newspaper, office paper, cardboard, corrugated cardboard, magazines, aluminum, metal, glass and acceptable plastics.
4. Compost leaves and plant clippings.
5. Chip brush and clean wood to make mulch or decorative chips, or use it as heating fuel in wood stoves or boilers.
6. Dispose of allowable waste materials at a licensed landfill. For more information about what items may be disposed of at licensed landfills, contact the Recycling Program at your DNR [regional office or service center](#).

Model Open Burning Ordinance

The model ordinance was prepared to assist Wisconsin counties, cities, villages and towns in adopting local regulations related to outdoor burning and burning of refuse. The model is intended to assist these units of government in enacting

their own ordinances and can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/am/am356.pdf>.

Burning Questions

For questions related to burning permit laws and open burning issues, visit the “[Burning Questions](#)” intranet page. This toolbox is intended to assist Forestry, Law Enforcement, Customer Service or Air and Waste staff with cross-programmatic questions from the public.

Open Burning

The Division of Forestry acknowledges that outdoor burning creates air quality concerns and wildfire risks. The following should not be interpreted as an endorsement to burn, but rather used to promote safe burning of materials that by law are legal to burn.

Individual residents/private citizens are allowed to burn lawn and garden debris, small quantities of clean untreated, unpainted wood, and clean paper/cardboard waste that is not recyclable, such as a pizza box.

Businesses, industries and municipalities are prohibited from open burning with very few exceptions. One exception is for wood burning facilities that have received a state-issued wood burning facility license. Check with your DNR Air or Waste Program staff for questions on any other exceptions.

Open Burning Recommendations

The description and characteristics listed below are intended as guidelines in helping the staff and the public distinguish between a fire that requires a permit and one that does not. Open burning, as referenced in this portion of the Handbook, is meant to include outdoor burning in or out of an enclosure such as a burn barrel or burn ring, but not including outdoor wood-fired boilers/heaters.

The following recommendations are intended to be guidelines that staff can use to advise the public. The following recommendations are not all inclusive and are designed to help reduce the chance of a fire escaping control. The state accepts no liability if the following recommendations are used, yet an individual’s fire escapes or damage occurs due to a fire.

Recommendations for Safe Burning Common to all Fires

1. Know your local burn regulations, and if required, obtain necessary permits.
2. Burn only legal materials (as defined by state statute and may be more restrictive by local ordinances).
3. Attend the fire at all times.
4. Maintain a fire size that allows for quick suppression with the available resources and within your personal abilities.
5. When you are done with your fire, be sure it is completely out. Use your senses to make sure the fire is out (Look, Listen, Smell, and Touch).
6. Have a sufficient water source and hand tools available to suppress the fire quickly.
7. Recognize hazards and mitigate them. Examples of hazards include:
 - a. Wind gusts
 - b. Cold fronts (or other weather factors) which may create gusty, shifty and erratic winds
 - c. Fires close to overhead power lines, tree canopies, structures or other combustible materials
 - d. Highly visible or high traffic areas

8. Have your address/fire number including county name and road name handy in case you have to call for assistance.
9. If your fire escapes control and you are not able to quickly suppress it, abandon your suppression effort and seek immediate assistance by calling 911 or your local emergency phone numbers.

Campfires

Description:	A cooking/warming/recreational fire
Intent:	Solely for warming or cooking purposes, not intended for the disposal of the materials being burned
Characteristics:	A fire that burns mostly woody fuels but may be started using some kindling materials, kindling may include the use of some leaves or paper, but sustaining the burning of the fire is not relying on kindling materials

Public Safety Recommendations for Campfires

1. Use a metal or rock/stone fire ring that completely surrounds and contains the fuels being burned.
2. A cleared area (down to mineral soil or other non-combustible materials) around the fire that is equal to or greater than the diameter of the fire ring and a minimum of 3 feet cleared surrounding the fire ring (examples: a 2 foot fire ring should have at least a 3 foot clearing around it, a fire ring with a diameter of 4 feet should have at least a 4 foot clearing around the fire ring).

Debris Burning (piles or in containers)

Description:	A fire that is used to dispose of leaves, vegetation, clean non-recyclable paper or clean, untreated, unpainted wood.
Intent:	Intent of the fire is (or would be reasonably assumed to be) the disposal the materials being burned rather than for the purposes of cooking, warming or recreational purposes.
Characteristics:	The fire may be located on the ground (inside a fire ring or not contained by a ring) or may be in a barrel, the range of fuels may vary from light fuels such as grass, twigs or leaves and/ or heavy fuels such as logs, stumps or wood scraps in addition to clean non-recyclable paper or clean, untreated, unpainted wood.

Public Safety Recommendations for Debris Burning

1. A minimum of five feet of area (cleared to mineral soil or consisting of other non-combustible materials) should be maintained around the burn pile. Where possible a larger cleared area is encouraged.
2. A pile should be kept to a small enough size that it can be controlled with basic hand tools and water. However, fuel types, weather conditions and personal limitations may further limit the size. Require that a special permit be issued for piles larger than 6' x 6' x 6'.
3. Start with a small pile and add to it as the pile burns down.
4. Plan on burning only as much materials that can be completely extinguished within the time period that your permit allows, and by the time that you will be leaving.
5. Fire must be attended at all times.
6. Encourage burning of heavy fuels, stumps, and large quantities of fuels when there is complete snow cover.

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7. If burning in barrels or other containers:
 - a. Container should be in mechanically stable condition and have vent holes no bigger than ¼ in size above the ash line of the container.
 - b. Use a heavy wire screen with holes no bigger than ¼ in size or cover that has small holes that will allow for some air movement, but will contain most of the embers.

Safety Note – Burning (especially of illegal materials) can emit dangerous toxins that can cause severe health issues. Firefighters (and other bystanders) are encouraged to stay clear of areas where illegal materials are being burned and if the burn cannot be safely extinguished without being exposed to the smoke, mitigation measures such as calling in fire department resources that have the ability to use breathing apparatus should be considered. In addition, when the burning of illegal materials is discovered, referrals to DNR Air or Waste program staff should be conducted for additional follow-up.

Broadcast Burning

Description:	A fire that consumes fuels over a relatively broad area (generally measurable in acres or fractions of acres).
Intent:	Generally for the purposes of site preparation (agricultural, silvicultural, etc.), prairie/savanna/etc. management, fire hazard reduction, habitat creation/maintenance purposes and maintenance of invasive/non-desirable vegetation.
Characteristics:	The fire is often located over an area that is covered in vegetation that may be dead, alive or a mix of both.

Public Safety Recommendations for Broadcast Burning

1. Size limitations regarding when a special burn permit is required vary around the state. Staff should be aware of the local size that requires the issuance of a special permit and/ or field inspection.
2. Broadcast burns often require equipment or supervision that is more than is required for small brush piles or campfires. When special equipment or supervision of the burn is required, those requirements should be clearly listed on the special permit that is issued.
3. For broadcast burns that are being conducted on Department lands or by Department staff, be sure that Department, district and area guidelines regarding prescribed and broadcast burning are known and followed. That includes the development and approval of a prescribed burn plan and use of required safety equipment.
4. Cooperation between agencies with trained firefighting personnel are encouraged as training opportunities, and to help accomplish burns that may be unreasonable based on current available staffing.
5. Smoke management concerns should also be addressed to reduce smoke over roadways, residential areas, and smoke-sensitive establishments (ex. Retirement homes, schools, hospitals, airports, etc.).
6. Permit holders should also notify local fire departments, law enforcement agencies and dispatch centers prior to lighting in order to reduce the amount of false runs when a passerby calls in the smoke from a broadcast burn.

Land Clearing Operations

Description:	A debris fire or fires that are used to dispose of large piles or windrows of stumps, logs and other woody debris.
Intent:	These fires are generally used to dispose of large piles of stumps, logs, etc., to clear land for agriculture or building sites.

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Characteristics: These piles cannot be burned within the time restrictions of a regular permit. Piles or windrows may burn for days or months depending on the circumstances. This is usually done with the aid of heavy equipment.

Public Safety Recommendations for Land Clearing Operations

1. Burning of large piles and windrows is recommended during months when snow cover is present.
2. If permits are required, a special permit can be issued after site inspection.
3. Direction should be given to the permit holder about the statutory restrictions regarding leaving their fire unattended.
4. In most cases, heavy equipment such as a farm tractor with a root rake or bucket (and/or other heavy equipment such as a bulldozer) should be present to manage the piles.
5. Permit holders should also notify local fire departments, law enforcement agencies and dispatch centers prior to lighting in order to reduce the amount of false runs when a passerby calls in the smoke from a land clearing operation.
6. Smoke management should also be addressed to reduce the hazard of smoke over roadways, residential areas, and smoke-sensitive establishments (ex. retirement homes, schools, hospitals, airports, etc.).
7. Permit holder must monitor the burned material and verify that it is completely out. Land clearing fire containing stumps, logs, etc., can hold over for months, even during snow cover.

DNR Programs That Regulate Open Burning

Forestry regulates open burning in certain areas of the state where forest fire hazard is high, requiring burning permits in certain areas during some times of the year. For more information, visit the [DNR open burning website](#).

Solid Waste

The 1990 Recycling Act prohibits commercial, industrial and municipal facilities from disposing of any yard wastes by either landfilling or burning without energy recovery. It also prohibits the landfilling or burning of many recyclable materials such as paper and cardboard. The Waste Management Program allows open burning of small amounts of woody materials only at private residences or at facilities which have received a special wood burning facility license.

Air Management

The combination of Air Management's restrictive rules on open burning (which have been in place since 1970) and the Waste Management Program rules mean that open burning of most waste materials is prohibited under state law. Local ordinance can override – and thus prohibit – the few exceptions that are allowed under state law.

PREVENTION INSPECTIONS

Prevention inspections can be considered as fire danger or fire occurrence dictates.

Logging Operations

Inspections of active logging operations should place emphasis on identification and mitigation of risk. Examples of sources of risk to locate are as follows:

1. Mufflers and spark arresters (see section [26.205](#), Wis. Stats.).
2. Use of logging equipment prone to starting fires such as rotary blade equipment, i.e. “hot saws”
3. Use and storage of highly flammable fuels such as gasoline, oil, etc.
4. Use of chain saws and other equipment.
5. Personal use of smoking material.

If serious risk situations are discovered, the logging operator will be advised and instructed to reduce or eliminate the risk. These inspections should be made when the ground is not snow covered. All inspections should be documented.

Recreational Areas - Campgrounds

Restricting campers to developed campgrounds will help to control the risk. Personal contacts with campers at campsites are encouraged especially in high hazard areas. Points to remember are:

1. Fire rings, grills and fireplaces will be located in areas cleared of flammable materials such as grass, leaves, paper, overhanging branches, or firewood.
2. A suitable barrel or container should be provided for disposal of hot charcoal. Every effort will be made to prevent indiscriminate dumping of these coals. This is vital both from a fire prevention and safety standpoint.

Maintaining close relationships with owners or managers of public and private campgrounds will make it easier to gain their assistance in eliminating serious risk and hazard combinations.

Right-of-Ways: State-owned or Controlled

Inspection should be made to determine the seriousness of risks and hazards along right-of-ways. If high risks and hazards exist in conjunction with each other, an attempt should be made to reduce or eliminate one or both of them. Efforts should be made to document these inspections.

Examples of State owned or controlled right-of-ways:

1. Recreational trails such as hiking, biking, snowmobile, ATV, hunter walking, canoe routes or portages
2. Roads, easements and access areas

Other Right-of-Ways

Railroads

For information on railroad right-of-ways, please see the Railroad Fire Prevention section below.

Power lines

Inspections of power line right-of-ways can be requested by the Department. The emphasis should be placed on

identification and mitigation of risk. The following statutes outline the requirements for identifying and eliminating natural hazards along power line right-of-ways.

Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter [PSC 113.0512](#), Identification of potential power line natural hazards

[PSC 113.0512\(2\)](#): Inspection to Identify Potential Power Line Natural Hazards.

[PSC 113.0512\(2\)\(a\)](#): *Inspection*. The utilities shall conduct inspections of its operations, including its transmission and distribution lines and facility rights-of-way, every 3 to 8 years and within 60 days of an order for inspection issued by the commission.

[PSC 113.0512\(2\)\(b\)](#): *Request for inspection*. Any person, organization or agency may request the utility to make an inspection for potential power line natural hazards and the commission on its own motion, may order the utility to inspect its transmission and distribution lines and rights-of-way for potential power line natural hazards. The utility shall make such inspection upon a showing that potential power line natural hazards may exist.

[PSC 113.0512\(3\)](#): Response to Identification of Potential Power Line Natural Hazards. Upon identifying a potential power line natural hazard, the utility shall take action to eliminate the hazard to the power line. The utility shall make a reasonable effort to notify the owner or other individual with authority, to trim or remove the tree of the potential danger and method by which the danger may be minimized or removed. Nothing in this section shall preclude the utility's obligation to immediately remove the hazard.

Note: Section [26.14](#) (9) (b), Stats., subjects a person to liability for the cost of suppressing a forest fire if the forest fire is intentionally or negligently set and allowed to escape. A utility not inspecting its lines or operations to identify, trim or remove hazardous trees consistent with these rules may be found negligent and, therefore, responsible for payment of forest fire suppression costs resulting from a forest fire caused by a tree or branch breaking or damaging a line or equipment. A utility complying with these rules, is not expected to be responsible for costs associated with forest fire suppression under s. [26.14](#) (9) (b), Stats. If a utility complying with this section is not authorized to trim or remove a tree it identifies as hazardous, consistent with the training required by it; a landowner notified of the potential danger or damage that may be caused to the transmission or distribution line or operation, might be found later to have been negligent and responsible for the costs of setting and allowing a forest fire to escape; however, the agency seeking reimbursement for the costs has the burden of proving that the landowner is responsible. The goal of this effort is to reduce the likelihood of outages and forest fires occurring.

The [Urban Tree Risk Management Guide](#) (USDA Forest Service publication NA-TP-03-03) is a comprehensive guide to hazardous tree identification, prevention, and correction. The publication can be found online or ordered through the USFS.

RAILROAD FIRE PREVENTION

The most common causes of railroad fires are exhaust, worn or defective brake shoes, and track grinding. Good cause determination enables us to attack the specific problem.

Analysis, identification of the local railroad problem, and planning is done at the local level. The Bureau of Forest Protection will provide Forestry personnel with training, information, and coordination in addition to training on how to do a preliminary inspection of locomotives and making contact with the railroad administration.

To be successful in working with the railroads it is necessary that all contacts, inspections, visits, or telephone calls with the railroad are documented in writing. A case file shall be established at each level of the program for each railroad being dealt with. Check the current [Forest Fire Program Record Retention/Disposition Authorization](#) for specific information on retention.

Railroad Orders

Under Chapter 26.20 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, the Department has the authority to establish standards and order maintenance of railroad right-of-ways and spark arrestors, and order track patrols, etc., through the issuance of “[Railroad Orders](#)”. Prior to issuance of these orders, it is advisable to work with your local railroad company to address any issues that have occurred or you perceive might occur due to lack of maintenance and/or fire weather. Discussion with the Locomotive Inspector and Bureau staff must occur before orders are issued.

Railroad Right-of-Ways

Inspections of railroad right-of-ways should place emphasis on identification and mitigation of risk. Wisconsin State Statute Ch. [26.20\(4\)](#) outlines the requirements of clearance along railroad right-of-ways:

Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 26.20 (4), Clearing right-of-way

[26.20\(4\)\(a\)](#): Every corporation maintaining and operating a railway shall, at least once in each year, and within 10 days when requested by the department in writing, cut and burn or remove from its right-of-way all grass and weeds and burn or remove from its right-of-way all brush, logs, refuse material, and debris within a reasonable time, and whenever fires are set for such purpose, shall prevent the escape of the fire from the right-of-way. Upon failure of a railway corporation to comply with this paragraph, the department may do or contract for completion of the work and the corporation shall be liable to the state for all of the costs of the work.

[26.20\(4\)\(b\)](#): The department may periodically require every corporation operating a railway to remove combustible materials from designated right-of-way or portions of a right-of-way, and lands adjacent to the right-of-way. This paragraph shall not relieve any railway corporation from responsibility or liability for causing any damage along any right-of-way nor from the corporation's duty to comply with paragraph (a).

Railroad Fire Problem Analysis

What is the history of railroad fires in the unit for the last five years? Use the following as a basis for your decision making:

1. Fires have occurred during at least three of the previous five years along any quarter mile length of the right-of-way. Are they on one side of the track or both sides?
2. Have there been one or more fires of at least 10 or more acres in size during the previous 10 years within any quarter mile length of the right-of-way. Were they on one side of the track or both sides? What was the cause? Would right-of-way work have prevented a fire, or fires, from starting?
3. Is the railway run seasonally or with engines not serviced by a company mechanic, and has a fire has occurred in the last 10 years?

If any of the above occurrence criteria is met, consider the following in determining the priority for accomplishing the work:

1. Access for suppression equipment is marginal or non-existent.
2. Complications or environmental damage arising from a fire or smoke results in a hazard to life or property.
3. No fire of any kind would be acceptable because of the value of the property at risk.
4. Train operates in volatile fuels such as pine or marsh, or in wildland urban interface areas.

What do you want done to deal with the problem? Some possible solutions include:

1. Installation of a plowed perimeter fire break, the outer edge of which is 25 feet from the center line of the track on the side or sides the fires have occurred on.

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2. Create a burned-out fuel break by igniting all fuel within 25 feet from the center line of the track on the side or sides the fires have occurred on. Burned-out fuel breaks should be completed as soon as possible after snow melt in order to be effective for the upcoming fire season. Burning must be done with appropriate permits, water availability on-site, adequate fuel breaks or wetlines, and any additional instruction per the local DNR forest ranger.
3. Installation of a fire break at the top of the cut or the bottom of the fill that is at least six feet wide.
4. Installation of a drivable fire break that will allow access for wheeled or tracked vehicles.
5. Installation of a water access point for a portable pump.
6. Require a railroad mechanic to install or maintain a spark arrester to manufacturer specifications.
7. Follow train with fire equipment during high fire danger and immediately report fires to 911 dispatch. The intent is to report fires to crew, who can put them out before they get larger.

The area forestry leader and/or the forest ranger shall meet with the appropriate road master/operator and jointly determine the location of the breaks, width of breaks, completion dates, and timing of future break maintenance in accordance with Department recommendations.

A follow-up letter will be sent to the road master/operator and railroad division engineer listing all instruction and technical advice so that no misunderstanding will occur. All such instructions (including agreed-upon completion dates for the specified work) and directions will refer to locations by mile post or other method used by the railroad to locate points along the right-of-way.

It is the responsibility of the area forestry leader to see that the agreed upon work is done in the manner and location specified. The local forest ranger should be assigned to work closely with the railroad in seeing that the work meets agreed upon standards. A record must be maintained of any contacts made by the local ranger or the railroad regarding progress on the work. If weather has prevented the railroad from completing the work by the agreed-upon completion date, this should be documented and taken into consideration in the decision-making process. After the forest ranger has made the necessary contacts and if little or no work is done by the agreed upon completion dates:

1. A letter will be prepared for the area forestry leader's signature. It will include:
 - a. Copies of all maps and previous correspondence and meeting dates
 - b. The identity of the railroad sections where right-of-way work was to be done, the standards to be met and the timeline for completion
 - c. A newly established deadline, if appropriate
 - d. A definite statement of what legal action will be taken if there is no compliance. This action will be discussed with the Forest Fire Law Enforcement Staff Specialist (FLESS) and Bureau of Legal Services prior to finalizing the letter
 - e. Copies of the finalized letter will be provided to the FLESS and Bureau of Legal Services
2. The procedure to follow if the railroad fails to comply is:
 - a. The district attorney will be briefed by the area forestry leader and/or forest ranger on the case. Include the original letter and all subsequent Department actions in the briefing
 - b. Prosecution will be under s. [26.20](#)(4) and (9), and s. [23.79](#)(3) Wis. Stats.
 - c. The FLESS and Bureau of Legal Services will be kept informed of all progress on the case
3. If the cleanup has not been completed by the original deadline, and there is a valid reason, (e.g., flooding, snow cover), a new completion date can be issued. If, at that time, the work still hasn't been done a citation can be issued and a new date established. If, at the newest deadline, the work still isn't done another citation can be given. Remember to keep a reasonable time frame in establishing deadlines.

4. REMEMBER: Each day the railroad fails to meet the compliance deadline is a separate violation. Each day the railroad can be cited for a violation. In addition s. [23.79](#) (3) can be used to obtain a court order for compliance. This results in a contempt of court with failure to comply.

If the railroad corporation fails to comply with the specified cleanup, the Department may do or contract for completion of the work and the corporation will be held liable for all costs.

Keep the FLESS and Bureau of Legal Services informed on the progress of these types of cases.

RED FLAG WARNINGS

Purpose & Objective

It is the objective of the Red Flag Warning Prevention Program to reduce the amount of property and resource damage caused by wildfires. Accomplishment will be through the use of outside agency cooperators and agency fire management forces to supplement the existing fire prevention effort.

Major elements of this program will be mass media saturation urging public cooperation in preventing fires, arson prevention due to physical presence of patrols in designated areas, the early detection and reporting of fires and the quick suppression of fire starts. This will be accomplished through utilization of volunteers, other cooperators, and agency patrols in designated areas.

While these actions are not illegal, the following should be avoided:

1. Building a campfire in any manner except in developed camping areas unless the individual has first obtained a special permit from a duly appointed area forest ranger or other person delegated that authority by the Department.
2. Smoking a pipe, cigar or cigarette except at places of residence or in a vehicle equipped with an ash receptacle.
3. Throwing matches, ashes or burning material from a vehicle.
4. Burning combustible materials in any area of organized protection where a Red Flag Warning is in place unless they have first obtained a special permit from a duly-appointed and designated forest ranger or other person designated by the Department.

Scope

All dispatch groups will prepare a Red Flag Warning Prevention Plan addendum to their Incident Resource Guides (IRG), which shall be implemented when Red Flag conditions exist. It is recognized that fire suppression activities, sudden changes in weather conditions and other factors may prevent the implementation of the Red Flag Warning Prevention Plan. Should circumstances preclude fully implementing, the area forestry leader is authorized to either not implement the Plan or to partially implement it.

This plan should take the following prevention measures into consideration:

1. Notification of all area personnel
2. Notification of local contacts – appropriate EFWs, county forestry department, Sheriff's Department, local dispatch centers and local fire departments
3. Cancellation of all burning permits including Special Burning Permits
4. Update Red Flag Warning message on WIS-BURN and website
5. Cancel all DNR prescribed burning

6. Regional public affairs and news media contact (i.e. encourage news media to use pre-prepared news releases and radio spot announcements)
7. Use of existing signs, posters, etc. for fire danger warning
8. Periodic updates by Fire Response Units (FRUs) to the area dispatcher of conditions in their area

Authority and Notification

The Bureau of Forest Protection and the National Weather Service identifies and implements a Red Flag Warning. Any area forestry leader can request implementation of a Red Flag Warning for other reasons (weather criteria is close and it's the 4th of July). If implementation is requested for any reason, the area leader shall first notify surrounding areas and the district forestry leader. The district forestry leader shall notify the Bureau of Forest Protection who will request the Red Flag Warning through the National Weather Service.

Red Flag Warning Implementation

Red Flag Warnings (RFWs) can be implemented in one of two ways:

1. A fire weather watch has been issued because the criteria are anticipated to be met based on the weather forecast issued the previous day. DNR and the National Weather Service (NWS) will discuss this with each other, and confirm that such an issuance is appropriate. If the criteria are confirmed in the morning forecast, which is done at approximately 5:00 a.m., the NWS will then independently issue a RFW. These forecasted weather criteria are:
 - a. 20 foot sustained ten minute winds in excess of 15 mph
 - b. Relative humidity below 25%
 - c. Temperature of 75 degrees or above
 - d. Fuels
 - Springtime - the Fine Fuel Moisture Code (FFMC) of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System (CFFDRS) reaches 92, this will be the trigger point for agencies to collaborate to determine if a Red Flag should be issued. A FFMC of 94 or higher has been identified as the predictable level that would commonly represent a Red Flag warning.
 - Summer time - CFFDRS BUI of 100+ trigger point for agencies to collaborate to determine if a Red Flag should be issued. CFFDRS BUI of 110+ = Fuels are critically dry and conducive to project fires.
2. In the event a fire weather watch was not issued the day before, but the 5:00 a.m. forecast indicates red flag criteria, the NWS will call the Bureau of Forest Protection to discuss whether or not a warning will be issued. The Bureau will then notify the appropriate dispatch group(s) of the decision.

Should the forecasted weather parameters not be met, and the DNR would like a RFW issued for other reasons (weather parameters are close but do not meet minimums but fuel conditions are extreme, or the fire risk is increased), DNR will initiate a contact with the NWS to request a RFW be issued.

Red Flag Warnings will be implemented by county. Prior to implementation, the Bureau of Forest Protection will consult with the area forestry leaders if conditions are close to set criteria to determine which counties will be affected. The Bureau of Forest Protection will coordinate all issuances with the various NWS offices.

The Warning

1. The area forestry leader will notify the area dispatcher that a warning has been declared.
2. The dispatcher will notify each forester/forest ranger and fire response unit.
3. The person in charge at the fire response unit will notify all fire management personnel and non-fire management personnel stationed there.

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4. Upon being notified, each forester/forest ranger will immediately implement their portion of the Red Flag Warning Plan.
5. The district forestry leader will notify the Regional Secretary's Director.

FRU considerations for a Red Flag Warning Plan

1. County notification of hazards related to mowing, grading and logging operations
2. Ensure all DNR vehicle have the appropriate Red Flag signage
3. Ensure media contacts are made

Sample Press Release

Madison, WI – In conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources, the National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning for today until 7:00 PM (or other appropriate time). A Red Flag Warning is issued when a variety of weather factors come together to create especially dangerous wildland fire conditions. High temperatures, low humidity's, high winds, and exceptionally dry fuels are anticipated and can result in catastrophic fires. As a result, the Department of Natural Resources is prohibiting all burning with DNR-issued burning permits, and is asking everyone to be especially careful with any activities that could potentially lead to a wildland fire. Campfires, outdoor grills, smoking, chain saws, ATV use or other small engine use all have the potential to throw a spark and ignite a dangerous and destructive fire. Please exercise restraint and extreme caution during these unusually dangerous circumstances.

Cancellation

1. In most cases the Red Flag Warning will be allowed to expire at the end of the day without any notifications
2. If the National Weather Service, in coordination with the Bureau of Forest Protection, determines that Red Flag Warning conditions no longer exist during the day, they will cancel the warning and notify the area dispatcher and/or area forestry leaders.
3. The area dispatcher will notify the Fire Response Unit (FRU) foresters/forest rangers, who will in turn notify all other personnel at the station.
4. The area dispatcher and FRU foresters/forest rangers will also notify all pre-planned cooperators of the cancellation, especially the news media.
5. The district forestry leader will notify the Regional Secretary's Director.

It is essential to the credibility of the Red Flag Warning Program that cancellation of warnings be prompt and complete.

Sample Red Flag Warning Informational Page

(For dispatch centers)

The National Weather Service in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has issued a RED FLAG WARNING for _____ counties today.

Very dry conditions combined with forecasted strong winds and low relative humidity today could result in large and very damaging wildfires. All firefighters, emergency medical services and law enforcement personnel should be on alert, and prepare themselves for this possibility.

Sample Red Flag Warning Plan

**Minong Ranger Station
Red Flag Warning Responsibility**

<u>Internal Notification</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Action Required</u>
1. FC Personnel at Minong	466-2022 466-2023 466-5424(f)	Notification Fly large flag Notify cooperators Affix vehicle signage
2. Other DNR Personnel		
a. Warden Dave Swanson	466-5358 (h) 466-5428 (w) 645- 0053 (c)	Informational

External Notification

1. EFW'S		
a. Main Store	259-3311 259-7888 259-3327(h)	Put up RFW sign
b. Dan Myers The Gun Clinic	466-4740 466-2328(h)	Fly small flag Put up RFW sign
c. Ron and Bonnie Crosby Pappy's Bar	466-2568	Informational
d. Bob Gruzlewski Buck & Wing	466-4301 466-4520(h)	Fly small flag
e. Tom & Sandy Johnson	634-8783	Fly small flag
2. Local Cooperators		
a. Chicog Fire Hall Neil and Karen Schutz	466-4882	Fly large flag
b. Post Office		Put up RFW sign
c. Henson's IGA		Put up RFW sign
d. The Outpost / Citgo		Put up RFW sign
e. Osrom's Sales and Service		Put up RFW sign
f. Link Stop		Put up RFW sign
3. Washburn Co. Sheriffs Office	468-2721 866-845-0734, #5, #1	Inform all personnel Informational pages

Request they make an informational page to all fire departments, EMS, Washburn County D.E.G. and the R.A.C.E.S. amateur radio group.

Other

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|---|
| 1. Minong Village Office | 466-2322 | Informational |
| 2. Minong Township Work Crew | 466-5916 | Informational + no mowing |
| 3. Dahlberg Power Co. | 378-2205 | Notify Cumberland or
Brule of any downed lines that occur. |
| | 1-800-736-5167 | Cumberland Dispatch 822-2510
Brule Dispatch 372-5686 |
| 4. Webb Lake PD, Paul Johnson | 259-7139
733-0123 | Informational |
| 5. Webb Lake Town Work Crew
(or call the Main Store or the
Webb Lake P.D.) | 259-7139 | Informational + no mowing |
| 6. Logging contractors (if present) | | |

ENFORCEMENT

Burning Permit Laws

Chapter [NR 30](#), Wis. Adm. Code, provides procedures and considerations in the issuance of burning permits. Apply the following guidelines in a manner consistent with Chapter [NR 30](#).

Annual Burning Permits

[Annual Burning Permits](#) (Form 4300-125) will be issued under the authority of section [26.12\(5\)\(a\)](#) and (b), Wis. Stats., by Division of Forestry, Customer Service staff and credentialed Emergency Fire Wardens (EFW) and others to whom this authority has been delegated within the Department.

Annual Burning Permits are intended for the disposal or removal (e.g. broadcast burns) of leaves, brush, pine needles, clean non-recyclable paper or clean untreated, unpainted wood. Burning can be done on the ground or in an incinerator/burn barrel. Annual Burning Permits will be issued for a period of a calendar year at no cost. If a burning permit is issued after December 1st, the permit is valid for 13 months. Burning permits are issued to an individual person, not the burn location, and are non-transferable.

In Intensive areas, Annual Burning Permits are required anytime the ground is not completely snow-covered. As general guidance, snow-covered means that snow exists around the material to be burned prior to, during, and immediately following the burn. It is not uncommon for us to have an inch of complete snow cover overnight, a person lights their debris on fire, and the snow melts throughout the day which allows the fire to escape later on. Debris burns should remain under 6x6x6 feet in size and broadcast burns should not exceed one acre. Burning is allowed from 6 pm to midnight (or 4 pm to midnight during daylight savings). Any burn that exceeds these restrictions may require the issuance of a [Special Burning Permit](#) (Form 9400-196).

In Extensive areas, Annual Burning Permits are required anytime the ground is not completely snow-covered between the months of January 1st through May 31st. Debris burns should remain under 6x6x6 feet in size and broadcast burns should not exceed 10 acres. Any burn that exceeds these restrictions may require the issuance of a [Special Burning Permit](#) (Form 9400-196).

Additional restrictive measures in regard to the setting of burning permit restrictions will be applied to peat soil and crown fire areas. Time restrictions should be considered as a prevention tool in areas where escaped fires or holdovers

are a problem and such permits will expire at midnight of each day.

Since the number one cause of wildfires is related to debris burning, the cancellation or suspension of burning is the first step to reduce the amount of property and resource damage caused by wildfires as weather conditions worsen and fire occurrence increases. Even though burning is not allowed, the annual permit may still be issued. Daily verification is still required for Annual Burning Permits.

Upon annual burning permit issuance, permit issuers should reinforce to the permit holder that it is important to check the daily burn restrictions and fire danger prior to burning via the phone number provided or on the web. In addition, during elevated times of fire danger, Red Flag Warnings or Emergency Burning Restrictions could also be in effect.

Roles & Responsibilities

EFW or DNR Employee

1. Issues annual burn permit which allows applicant to burn
2. Provides copy of permits to forester/forest ranger annually

Forester/Forest Ranger

1. Recruits and trains EFWs and other permit writers
2. Supplies forms, describes permit system to EFWs and other permit writers and provides any related updates.
3. Maintains a running total of the number of handwritten burning permits by Fire Response Unit (FRU) for each EFW and ensures the data are entered in the quarterly reporting system or as specified. This information will be utilized in the EFW evaluation process.
4. Informs area forestry leader of changing hazard conditions which may influence permit restrictions

Area Dispatcher or Designee

1. Updates burning permit restrictions on WIS-BURN internet and phone by 11:00 a.m. each day.
2. Dispatches fire management personnel to respond to burning complaints

Area Forestry Leader

1. Sets burning restrictions on the county level which comply in form and substance to provisions of chapter [NR 30](#) (Example: No burning will be allowed until after 4:00 p.m., or no burning allowed today.)
2. Approves exceptions on an individual basis
3. Suspends or cancels daily burning, implements Red Flag Warnings or Emergency Burning Restrictions.

Special Burning Permits

[Special Burning Permits](#) (Form 9400-196) for large quantities, all day permits, permits sought by commercial contractors and/or broadcast burns exceeding the local maximum size limit need to be issued by the local DNR ranger station or their designee.

Roles & Responsibilities

Area Dispatcher or Designee

1. Updates fire reporting system with numbers and acres burned for all broadcast burns
2. Maintains list of current issued special burn permits within area as provided by the local ranger

Forester/Forest Ranger or Designee

1. Receives request for issuance of Special Permit
2. Based upon visual inspection or personal knowledge of the site, approves and sets specific conditions or denies permit
3. States special circumstances, specific size area and special instructions on permit
4. Reports permit to area dispatcher if approved

Area Forestry Leader

1. Sets daily burn restrictions

Licensed Solid Waste/Brush Disposal Sites

Any requests for permits for solid waste disposal sites should be treated as a [Special Burning Permit](#) (Form 9400-196) particularly if it is a seasonal permit. After obtaining a proper license, wood burning facilities and municipalities must still obtain a [Special Burning Permit](#) (Form 9400-196) and follow area restrictions.

Special Burning Permits to operators will be issued as follows:

1. Permits will be issued only for those solid waste disposal sites that have provisions for burning in an issued license. Permits will only be issued by foresters/forest rangers or area dispatchers.
2. Permits will not be issued if an order has been issued to “close” the site.
3. Additional fire control provisions may be written into the permit at the time of issue for a specific instance or period of time. These provisions would normally concern the safety of burning operations not covered in the license.
4. Permits to burn at solid waste disposal sites will not be issued to any person other than the site operator.

Illegal Burning

Burning permits for other debris burning should not be issued for materials in violation of chapters [NR 429](#) or [NR 502](#), Wis. Adm. Code. Local ordinances may be more restrictive than state law.

[State Statutes and Administrative Codes related to Open Burning](#)

Solid Waste Reduction, Recovery and Recycling: [287.07](#) Prohibitions on land disposal and incineration.

Work Crews

Requests for burning from municipal or highway crews, etc., shall be treated as a [Special Burning Permit](#) (Form 9400-196). Crews must specifically be instructed that the fire must be attended and completely extinguished when they leave each day. Make sure the special restrictions are written on the permit.

Written documentation may also be provided to the County Highway Department each year explaining the permit requirements and statutory responsibility for their burning operations. A copy of written documentation must be kept by the local Forester/Ranger. This serves as a reminder for the highway department, and more importantly serves as written documentation that we notified them of the laws and regulations should their fire escape or require enforcement action.

Permits in the Cooperative Area

Cooperative Fire areas or areas inside the city limits of incorporated cities and villages are regulated by town chairpersons, local and county officials and are primarily protected by fire departments. The Department may provide an electronic template of a generic burn permit (found on the Burning Questions webpage) to local officials who regulate burning in Cooperative areas upon request. When requested, the Department will provide notices (prepared by the Department) to be posted in 5 or more public places in each township forbidding the setting of fires in cooperative townships [26.13](#) (3).

WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE PROGRAM

Problem: The development of residences, vacation homes, and communities in areas of flammable wildland fuels, a condition known as the wildland urban interface (WUI), has created an increased number of structures or values at risk for destruction from wildfires.

Objective: The protection of life, property, and resources from wildfires through aggressive wildfire prevention, law enforcement, pre-suppression, and suppression activities. Incorporate Firewise materials and information to enhance and reinforce existing activities.

Because of changing social values, an ever-increasing number of people are using the forested areas of Wisconsin for home sites, recreation, and leisure. This increased use has resulted in many developments that have no plan to prevent a wildfire from destroying homes. Planned programs of fire prevention and safety in the WUI areas of Wisconsin reduce the chance of such a disaster.

Firewise Program

To achieve this increased fire safety, Wisconsin DNR Forestry personnel should utilize the Firewise program to deliver effective wildland fire prevention and preparedness messages. The Firewise program is an effective method to address the growing WUI challenge because;

1. Firewise is a nationally accepted program.
2. The Firewise program has a wealth of literature and information that address specific concerns from a hazard mitigation standpoint and offers universal mitigation measures that can be implemented in Wisconsin.
3. Utilizing the Firewise program may help minimize the time and effort local Wisconsin DNR Forestry personnel devote to the development and delivery of effective messages.

Prioritizing Efforts

Based upon the statewide listing of Communities at Risk and Communities of Concern, supervisory direction, and projected future development, the target audience for Firewise program messages will be the following in order of priority:

1. Local Political Groups and Organizations
 - a. Homeowner and Lake Associations
 - b. Fire Departments
 - c. Town Boards and Town Associations
 - d. Planning and Zoning Authorities
 - e. Emergency Management Offices

- f. University of Wisconsin Extension
2. Businesses
 - a. Developers
 - b. Realtors
 - c. Landscapers/Arborists
 - d. Forest Industry
 - e. Consultant Foresters
 3. Homeowners/Landowners
 - a. Individual contacts
 - b. Groups of homeowners (e.g., subdivisions) not guided by an association

Contacts with Local Political Groups and Organizations

Homeowner and Lake Associations

Take advantage of meetings and events that local homeowner/lake associations may hold to present some of the challenges faced by fire organizations when protecting property from wildland fires. Utilize Firewise information and examples from across the country, especially ones from Wisconsin or the Great Lakes states. PowerPoint presentations showing positive (and sometimes negative) aspects of Firewise properties should be used. Field personnel should enlist the support of local fire departments, natural resource organizations and emergency management personnel to reinforce fire safety messages. Take advantage of any local recent fires that posed or could have posed suppression challenges and resulted in multiple structure saves or losses.

Some homeowner/lake associations have their own newsletter and/or website. Articles in newsletters and links to web pages are inexpensive means to deliver wildfire prevention messages to such groups of people.

Don't underestimate the power of appropriately placed informational signs dealing with fire safety. These signs should include appropriate local messages and be constructed of materials that require minimum maintenance. Signs need to be placed in high traffic areas (e.g. entries to subdivisions, etc.), and placement should be approved by governing bodies.

Leave homeowner/lake association board members with information regarding the [Firewise Communities USA Recognition Program](#). It is a nationally recognized program that places the responsibility of wildfire preparedness directly on the community. Residents are encouraged to work with their local forest management agency, local fire officials, and other community stakeholders to assess hazards in their community and create a plan of action as how to reduce those hazards. There is no need to pressure an association to participate in the program. However, if a community shows interest, plan a time to explain the recognition process and put them in contact with the state Firewise liaison.

The process of a community becoming recognized as Firewise takes about a year. DNR staff involvement will require one person committed to being the community's local contact, generally the WUI specialist for the fire landscape, and will include approximately:

1. One day devoted to a community assessment
2. One day devoted to compiling the assessment results
3. One possible additional day to work with the local fire department to make sure they agree with the assessment
4. One day to meet with the community Firewise Board to discuss the assessment
5. One day to review the community's Plan of Action

6. Any additional time needed to consult with the community on their Firewise activities

The local forest ranger and Fire Chief should be included in the community assessment day and review the association's Plan of Action to make sure they are on the right track. Becoming a recognized Firewise Community is primarily the community's responsibility. Being involved in a nationally recognized program will provide a recognized Firewise Community with funding opportunities to reduce fuels around structures and throughout the community. DNR staff and local fire officials are mostly involved to provide technical assistance and advice.

Fire Departments

These contacts should be educational contacts initially. Once the challenges of the WUI are described, attempt to involve local fire department members in the presentation of any programs as well as in brainstorming new ideas to implement measures to meet the challenges the WUI presents.

The Hazard Mitigation program provides an opportunity to partner with fire departments. Examples of past projects coordinated with the assistance of fire departments include: fire-prone property assessments, the posting of Smokey Bear fire danger signs, wildfire season fire prevention patrols, the distribution of fire prevention tote bags, and the creation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Other projects eligible for funding are those specific to wildfire prevention and awareness and hazard mitigation.

Fire departments should be encouraged to apply for grant funds administered by the Department of Natural Resources and engage in wildland fire training opportunities. Grant funds are available through the Forest Fire Protection Grant (FFP) program to increase forest fire protection and suppression capabilities through cooperative efforts with local fire departments and county/area fire associations.

The Division of Forestry has instructors available to teach wildland fire training to fire departments in Wisconsin. The 8-hour course, "Introduction to Wildland Fire Suppression for Wisconsin Fire Departments" is designed to offer firefighters information needed to safely suppress wildland fires in Wisconsin.

This introductory course should be offered annually for all new fire department members.

Town Boards and Town Associations

The main purpose of contacts with local units of government is to describe wildland fire suppression challenges faced by emergency agencies in the WUI, gain local acceptance of and encourage adoption of wildland fire safety recommendations in local ordinances, and educate local officials about the Firewise program and the opportunities the program offers. This also offers a forum to discuss which fire safety related recommendations may conflict with local zoning ordinances.

Provide local units of government with a copy of [Protecting Life and Property from Wildfire: An Introduction to Designing Zoning and Building Standards for Local Officials](#), produced by the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact (DNR PUB FR-113) for recommendations on protecting new housing and developments from wildfire.

Forestry personnel with fire prevention and suppression responsibilities should familiarize themselves with the concepts involved in creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Through the passing of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act in 2003, communities are encouraged to prepare such a plan to help them identify priorities for protecting life, property, infrastructure, and natural resources in the wildland urban interface. Local units of government should be encouraged to work with their local Wisconsin DNR Forestry personnel and fire departments to create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Such plans provide an assessment of a fire-prone community and identify fuels reduction and education opportunities. Provide local officials with a copy of the guide, [Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#).

Planning and Zoning Authorities

Contact should be made with local planning authorities early on in their comprehensive land use planning process. If local comprehensive land use plans are well underway or complete, contact can still be made, as these types of documents are meant to be updated periodically. Local planning authorities should be provided with a copy of

[Protecting Life and Property from Wildfire: An Introduction to Designing Zoning and Building Standards for Local Officials](#), (DNR PUB FR-113) for recommendations on protecting new housing and developments from wildfire. It is recognized that adoption of these principles into codes may be a very long process in some communities. Remember, we do not wish to eliminate development; our sole interest is to make certain that development takes place in a safe manner and location. Safe growth is smart growth. The publication emphasizes recommendations regarding:

1. Creating Firewise landscapes
2. Vehicular access
3. Signing streets, roads, and buildings
4. Emergency water supplies
5. Structural design and construction
6. Debris burning

In addition, consideration is given to providing local fire agencies an opportunity to review proposed development plans to allow them input on fire protection needs for the community. Planning authorities should also work with fire protection agencies to identify special fire problems in an area (e.g. areas of highly fire-prone vegetation, inadequate access for emergency vehicles, inadequate water supply, high housing density, etc.). Consequences of inaction should be made very clear.

Large development projects need special attention. Current and projected fire protection needs should be included in all large development plans. Particular consideration should be given to the placement of greenbelts or fuel breaks around and within areas of high housing density.

Local planning authorities should be encouraged to take opportunities to improve the survivability of existing homes when possible. Possible means include when an owner applies for a building permit to remodel or expand his or her home. Under some conditions, driveways can be reconstructed and fuel breaks can be installed or improved. Local authorities should also be encouraged to generate a fire-safe attitude in a community by making sure homeowners are aware of hazards in their area and providing them with information regarding what steps can be taken to lessen those hazards.

Provide planning authorities with the guide, [Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#). Encourage them to work with local officials, Wisconsin DNR Forestry personnel, and their local fire departments to create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Emergency Management Offices

Although Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) fits in as a larger picture within the Fire Management Handbook there are certain things that could be useful within the wildland urban interface. Emergency Management can assist with local natural disaster planning, such as a large wildfire impacting communities of different sizes. One way to do that is through the WEM Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). A project does not have to be in a declared county to be eligible for HMGP funding. Therefore, every community that is vulnerable to natural hazards should consider applying for HMGP funds. WEM provides workshops to communities involving various types of natural disasters and how to prepare for them. Contact can be made at the local level with the county EM director to set up these workshops. Look to the Wisconsin Emergency Management website for more information: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/>

University of Wisconsin Extension

The UW-Extension Basin Education Initiative with the DNR designs and delivers educational programs, assists organizations, and builds partnerships to promote understanding and stewardship of Wisconsin's natural resources at the watershed and landscape scale. Basin Educators are resources that may be utilized to reinforce wildland fire

safety messages. They should be considered for assistance with the creation and distribution of fire prevention education and outreach items and assistance with local events such as Firewise workshops. They have been of assistance in the creation of a Firewise landscaping publication, poster, and display, have helped facilitate a Firewise workshop, and conducted a survey on public perception of wildfire awareness mailings. Additionally, they can often provide insight on local shoreland ordinances (which sometimes are in conflict with Firewise recommendations), land use planning, parcelization, and other forestry-related topics. Provide them with examples of available publications and other educational items. The Central Wisconsin Basin Educator has a table top Firewise display for use at local events. The Fire Prevention Specialist Team includes a member from the Basin Educator Initiative. For more information on the Basin Education Initiative, go to: <http://www.uwex.edu/erc/basin.html>.

Contacts with Local Businesses

The first step in obtaining assistance from local businesses should be information sharing. Holding a workshop for various local private contractors and businesses can be an effective way to educate these potential cooperators about the challenges the WUI presents for local emergency agencies. These workshops should be specific to the group you are targeting. UW Extension Basin Educators may be able to help develop, organize, and present these workshops.

Utilizing local businesses and contractors to distribute Firewise information to existing and potential private landowners can be an effective way to reinforce our wildfire prevention and preparedness messages. Existing publications are good choices for such distribution. Flyers containing local information on fire causes and the challenges of existing WUI situations can be used to supplement generic messages. Include basic information such as outdoor burning laws and regulations, local emergency contact information, etc.

Developers and Realtors

WUI fires indicate that the terrible losses of homes, cabins, trailers, barns, and outbuildings that occur during wildfires could be minimized if developers incorporated "fire-safe practices" into their plans. The best time to prevent the loss of a home in a forest fire is before the home is built. The forester/forest ranger should continually survey his sub-area to determine what development is going on and where potential site developer contacts should be made. Contacts with rural home developers should be made prior to and during construction. Included on the next page is a sample letter to the developer that can be used as is or adapted to better fit your local situation. When possible, enlist the aid of the local fire department in explaining the benefits of planned development. When, in the opinion of the forester/forest ranger, a contact should be made, the following materials are available:

1. Introductory letter
2. [Protecting Life and Property from Wildfire: An Introduction to Designing Zoning and Building Standards for Local Officials](#) (DNR PUB FR-113)
3. Wisconsin DNR fire prevention and Firewise publications

Local realtors can be contacted to assist with the distribution of wildfire prevention information. Provide them with packets of publications they can hand out to recent homebuyers in Communities at Risk and Communities of Concern. Included on the next page is a sample letter to homebuyers that can be included in the packet.

Fire Management Handbook

Sample Letter to Developers

Dear _____,

The building project you are presently developing is located in an area considered to be highly dangerous in the event of a forest fire. Fast burning forest fuels in the vicinity will make an approaching forest fire difficult to control if the weather is dry and windy. If a major forest fire approaches your development, chances are that our firefighting forces will be unable to give individual attention to each building that is threatened. It has been our experience that the buildings saved are the ones whose builders took fire precautions in advance.

We suggest you incorporate Firewise principles into your project. Examples of precautions that could be incorporated into the development are: create roads wide enough for fire equipment and evacuees to pass, properly dispose of road building debris, create defensible space around buildings, and eliminate long dead-end roads without adequate turnaround space.

I am willing to spend some time with you to help you develop a Firewise community.

Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Sample Letter for Recent Homebuyers

Dear Homebuyer,

The Department of Natural Resources has been working to educate both developers and new property owners in _____ County on the risk of forest fires. As part of this effort, fire prevention packets are being shared with people that have recently purchased property in fire-prone areas. Our purpose in contacting you is to heighten your awareness of the potential of wildfires on your newly purchased property and to communicate steps you can take to protect your property.

The potential for large, destructive forest fires exists in _____ County. (Provide examples of recent wildfire activity).

Enclosed you will find a variety of fire prevention and educational materials related to the hazards that exist within rural areas in which homes are intermingled with the vegetation, an area called the "wildland urban interface". The enclosed publications offer suggestions and ideas to incorporate into building materials and the landscaping that surrounds your new home. Also enclosed is an overview of Wisconsin's forest fire laws and burning regulations.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Landscapers/Arborists

Landscapers and arborists may also be helpful in the reinforcement of wildland fire safety messages. These resources can provide advice on proper tree pruning and planting. They should also be knowledgeable as to what kind of plants, shrubs, and trees will grow in the sandy soils of our most fire-prone areas. In addition, they may be able to provide advice on home composting as an alternative to burning yard debris. Provide them with literature on tree pruning, tree planting, composting, and Firewise landscaping that they can share with property owners in Communities at Risk and Communities of Concern. When possible, submit articles regarding modifications to the home ignition zone to landscaper/arborist newsletters. These kinds of articles can be most effective in newsletters that are distributed around spring fire season.

Forest Industry

Industrial forest land owners should be contacted when a Community Wildfire Protection Plan is going to be created in a community in which they own land. The designated DNR contact person for the plan (generally the local WUI specialist or forest ranger) should provide them with the opportunity to be on the planning committee and should encourage their attendance at all planning meetings.

Consultant Foresters

Consultant foresters can be another point of contact for spreading wildland fire safety messages to non-industrial, private landowners with property in Communities at Risk and Communities of Concern. The sharing of information is more important when a structure, especially a home, exists on the property. When possible, share wildfire prevention publications with consultant foresters and encourage them to pass on publications and information to the landowners they are working with.

Contacts with Homeowners/Landowners

This section contains information about individual home ignition zone assessments and group contacts to educate people on how to assess their own properties. Home ignition zone assessments are evaluations of an area 100 to 200 feet around a person's home (residential or seasonal). The assessment focuses on mitigation strategies the homeowner can accomplish to make their home better able to withstand a wildfire, without relying on outside assistance from firefighters. The assessment is based on national standards established in "Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone," a course developed by the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Working Team of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

Follow-up solutions should be considered for implementation after homeowners have had a chance to consider ways to mitigate hazards on their properties. The Hazard Mitigation Program has provided funds for chipping days, community tree thinning projects, and the establishment of brush collection sites. Staff should consider applying for funds to implement such a project locally.

Individual Contacts

Contacts are made to the property of an individual owner who has a dwelling or other structure in a Community at Risk or Community of Concern. DNR Forestry personnel may assess properties as workload allows or the work may be contracted out with local volunteer fire departments or other qualified sources. Prior to beginning home assessments, DNR Forestry personnel shall complete "Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone" training. In situations where the assessments are contracted out, the local personnel must have an acceptable level of WUI knowledge. This is to be attained through Home Ignition Zone training, given by knowledgeable field staff. Ideally, contact will be made with the homeowners in advance so they have the opportunity to be present during the assessment. A direct mailing is one way to achieve this. In some cases, a homeowner may not wish to have his/her property assessed and they can opt out. If properties are assessed "door-to-door" and the homeowner is not present at the time, send them a letter that explains the purpose of your visit with contact information if they would like their property assessed at another time. Mailing addresses can be obtained from the local government tax roll. Assessments should be made at frequencies determined by the area forestry leader.

Fire Management Handbook

Materials to use in making assessments will be supplied by the Department, but may be supplemented with appropriate local materials. At a minimum the contact should include:

1. Introductory letter to the homeowner
2. Home Ignition Zone Assessment form
3. [Burning Permits: It's Your Responsibility](#) brochure (PUB-FR-400). Local pamphlets or flyers describing outdoor burning laws can be more informative and should be used if available
4. Appropriate brochures detailing the interface problem and what can be done about it

Sample Letter for Home Ignition Zone Assessments

Dear Property Owner,

Date of Assessment

In the interest of wildfire safety, we are making courtesy visits to residences and seasonal cabins where the potential for a large, catastrophic wildfire exists. The following is a result of what we observed on the above date concerning potential wildfire hazards around structures on your property. Keep in mind that seasonal changes such as leaf fall as well as your schedule of upkeep and maintenance could easily change the hazard potential for a number of items. Also included are brochures that you may find helpful if you should decide to make changes to your property that will potentially decrease your wildfire hazards.

Due to the unpredictable behavior of a wildfire, survivability of your home cannot be guaranteed even with the most well-maintained properties. It is, however, in your best interest to minimize the wildfire risks around your property. Research is showing that oftentimes, it's "the little things" that cause homes to ignite, such as vegetation growing next to foundations, flying embers that land in firewood stacks and rain gutters, or a drought-stricken lawn. Simple changes and a regular maintenance schedule can greatly increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire.

Keep in mind that local ordinances and covenants concerning shoreline property, driveway standards, building materials, etc. may exist where you live. Check with your local water management specialist, local zoning administrator, and/or homeowner association to find out if ordinances or covenants exist where you live.

The greatest wildfire risk occurs after snow melt and lasts until full vegetation green-up, usually March through June. Another time of wildfire danger occurs in the fall after the first killing frost occurs. However, wildfires may occur any time of the year when the conditions are right. Taking precautions now to mitigate hazards on your property can increase the chance your home or cabin will survive a wildfire. For more information, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestFire/index.asp>

If you have any questions, please contact the _____ Ranger Station - telephone number -.

Signature, Address, Date, Telephone Number (or attach business card).

Groups of Homeowners

If your situation permits the development of group contacts (e.g. a cluster of homes around a lake or an easily identifiable subdivision or neighborhood), you can enlist the aid of partners such as your local WUI specialist, UW Basin Educator or fire chief and set up a program. Handout material should include the same items as in an individual contact, but let the homeowner assess his/her own property after you have explained the assessment form thoroughly to the group.

The returns from a group contact may be advantageous in that 1) you can get the message to more people in a shorter span of time; 2) you may be able to instill a "community" effort that benefits the entire development by encouraging people to work together to lower their collective wildfire risk.

Funding Sources and Grants

Hazard Mitigation Program

The Hazard Mitigation Program is made possible through grants received from the U.S. Forest Service. Each year, Hazard Mitigation applications are sent to area forestry leaders, State Forest Superintendents, and the Forestry Leadership Team, at which time staff is able to apply for funding in support of projects related to wildfire education, community planning, and hazardous fuels mitigation. Projects must benefit a community at risk to wildfire.

Contact the Wildland Urban Interface Program Coordinator for details on the Hazard Mitigation Program, including guidelines, applications, and past projects.

Forest Fire Protection (FFP) Grants

State funds are available to increase forest fire protection and suppression capabilities through cooperative efforts with local fire departments and county fire associations as per s. 917, 1997 Wisconsin Act 27, Stats. Fire departments that have executed a forest fire suppression agreement acceptable to the Department are eligible to apply.

For more information regarding FFP grants, please refer to the Forest Fire Protection Grant Program section in the Partner Agreements chapter of this Handbook.

EDUCATION

School Programs

Juveniles are annually responsible for between 2% and 5% of all forest fires that occur in Wisconsin. Nationwide statistics point to a greater percentage of structural fires resulting from juveniles. It is highly likely that for every reportable wildfire, there are many juvenile related fire-play situations that do not result in reportable wildfires. Correcting inappropriate behavior related to fire-play at an early age can prevent future problems.

In order to maximize fire prevention efforts with juveniles, consider working with cooperators such as fire departments to provide school programs and events in local areas. Routine school programs are an important aspect of any overall fire prevention program and are normally broken down according to grade levels with some general guidelines listed below.

Minimum Standards

Recognizing that school programs can be an effective wildfire prevention tool, all school students within a Fire Response Unit (FRU) at grade levels K-3 should be contacted at least once every three years. Programs for other grade levels are strongly recommended but will be at the discretion of the forestry team leader based on workload priorities. Remember that fire prevention programs at the older grade levels can be very effective in helping prepare students for decisions they will be making in their adult lives. In addition, working with older grade levels can be very effective in accomplishing special projects that may have widespread ramifications from a forest fire prevention standpoint. By using appropriate students for special projects, you may actually minimize the time you spend on a special wildfire prevention project and provide you with a cost-effective way to complete a project.

Resources Available

The Learning, Experiences, and Activities in Forestry (LEAF) Wisconsin K-12 Wildland Fire Lesson Guide is an extremely useful resource that is recommended for use at the K-12 levels. All Wisconsin teachers and DNR stations should have access to the LEAF lesson guide and teachers can prepare students for any a follow-up presentation you may present using this lesson guide. This lesson guide is not an excellent resource for local teachers, but also provides you with many ideas for follow-up to students. Lesson guide information and other wildfire prevention resources can also be accessed at the [LEAF website](#).

Other resources that have been successfully used and developed by various individuals are available, and are

Fire Management Handbook

referenced in the “Prevention Materials” section of this chapter or may be available on the intranet. The LEAF website, <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/leaf>, has cataloged several examples of fire prevention programs. Many of these approaches have stood the test of time and have been the basis for some of the topics in the LEAF lesson guide, so take the time to look these activities over. Some examples are referenced in the grade levels below.

Program Priorities:

- High Conduct at Interval Indicated, Identified as High return for the time expended (generally captive, interacting audiences). Seek out opportunities within or bordering) FRU to present to these groups.
- Moderate Interval determined as workload allows and based on guidance from local supervisor. Identified as moderate return for time expended (generally non-captive audiences), based mainly on requests received or local history.

Preschool

- Priority: Moderate
Interval: No Set Interval
Use of Smokey Bear: Yes, but may be scary for the younger kids.
Length of Program: 5- 15 minutes
Target Messages: Danger of Playing with matches/ Lighters
Good Fires and Bad Fires

- Available Resources: [Prevention Intranet Page](#)
Videos
ABC’s of Fire Safety
Puppet Shows
“Take Smokey Home Backpack”

Kindergarten-3rd grade

- Priority: High
Interval: At least once every 3 years
Use of Smokey Bear: Yes, by the 3rd grade level consider not having Smokey make an appearance.
Length of Program: Up to 30 minutes (present relative to grade level)
Target Messages: Danger of Playing with matches/ Lighters
Good Fires and Bad Fires
Consequences of carelessness

- Introduce causes of fires and how to prevent them
What to do in the event of a fire (reinforcing messages delivered by structural fire service)
Safe Campfires
Available Resources: [Prevention Intranet Page](#)
Videos
Power Points
Smokey’s Fire Prevention Box
Fire safety games
“Bad Campfire-Good Campfire” card series
“Take Smokey Home Backpack”

4th grade- 6th grade

- Priority: Moderate
Interval: No Set Interval
Program
Recommendations: Basic introduction to Fire Behavior
Forest Fire History (Wisconsin)

Fire Management Handbook

	Personal Protective Equipment Demonstrations
	Fire Ecology
	Suppression Equipment Demonstrations
	Fire Management Program Overview
	Prescribed Burning
Use of Smokey Bear:	Not Recommended
Length of Program:	Up to 30 minutes
Target Messages:	Introduce Causes of Fires and how to prevent them Consequences of Carelessness
Available Resources:	Prevention Intranet Page Videos Power Points Fire Prevention Games Wisconsin Forest Fire Trivia

Middle School

Priority:	Moderate
Interval:	No Set Interval
Program	
Recommendations:	Prescribed Burning Forest Fire Detection Forest Fire Suppression Resources Tactics and Techniques Forest Cover Types Forest Fire Danger Calculation Outdoor Burning Permits Wildland/Urban Interface Forest Fire Safety
Use of Smokey Bear:	Not Recommended
Length of Program:	Up to 30 minutes (present relative to grade level)
Target Messages:	Prevention of Wildfires Firewise Around the Home
Available Resources:	Prevention Intranet Page Videos Power Points Fire Prevention PSAs

High School

Priority:	Moderate
Interval:	No Set Interval
Program	
Recommendations:	Special Forest Fire Prevention Projects Training students to help present programs to peers or younger students Career Day Presentations
Use of Smokey Bear:	Not Recommended
Length of Program:	No Set Length (Discuss with Teacher.)
Target Messages:	Forest Fire Issues and Challenges
Available Resources:	Prevention Intranet Page Videos Power Points Interactive Forest Fire Simulations

Adults

In Intensive and Extensive areas, personnel should actively seek out opportunities, as workload allows, to present wildfire prevention programs. When presenting these programs, do not merely deliver a prevention message. Rather, envision how this group may help with the DNR fire prevention efforts. Having a thorough understanding of local wildfire causes and what the DNR is currently doing to prevent those forest fires is essential. Working with others to accomplish important fire prevention tasks not only can result in more effective fire prevention efforts but can help establish lasting relationships that will pay big fire prevention dividends in the future. Consider utilizing other area staff, UW Extension, Basin Educators, WUI specialists, and other Bureau staff to fill requests.

Personnel should utilize PowerPoint programs, existing displays or field tours to deliver and reinforce the message. Inserting local examples into these programs will personalize the program and make it more meaningful to the audience. Some examples of adult groups that can be contacted with fire prevention programs include:

1. Fire departments or county fire associations – Outdoor burning laws and burning permits, Red Flag Warning, Emergency Burning Restrictions, forest fire danger rating signs, school program presentation, etc.
2. Emergency Fire Wardens – General forest fire management overview, burning permits, Red Flag Warnings, Emergency Burning Restrictions, prevention material distribution, forest fire danger rating signs.
3. County or town boards – General forest fire management overview, general fire prevention, outdoor burning ordinances, alternatives to burning, recycling and composting opportunities.
4. Homeowner and lake associations – General fire prevention, development planning, becoming a Firewise community, alternatives to burning, recycling and composting opportunities.
5. Real estate agents/associations – Outdoor burning law and emergency services pamphlet distribution.
6. Home builders associations – Outdoor burning laws, construction standards, potential prevention funding assistance.
7. Education boards or local school district committees – Potential Juvenile Fire Setter participants, if a program is in place.
8. County committees or agencies (planning, zoning, recreation, law enforcement and highway departments are some examples) – General fire prevention, Red Flag Warning explanation, outdoor burning laws, fire prevention signage.
9. Church or other civic groups (optimist club, garden clubs, rotary clubs) – General fire prevention contacts, burning permits, alternatives to burning, recycling and composting opportunities.
10. State Forest or Parks Interpretative Programs – Campfire talks, equipment displays, open houses or other park or forest special events may offer opportunities to deliver a forest fire prevention message.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of adult groups that prevention staff can work with. There may be others in the local area that can offer not only an opportunity to spread the wildfire prevention message, but also offer opportunities to build relationships that will eventually increase the effectiveness of the DNR fire prevention messages.

Personnel should take into consideration the group's background and whether they are a captive or passive audience when presenting fire prevention programs. Localize the presentation so the audience can relate to the message. Consider the interests of the groups, any existing programs they currently are involved with that correspond to your fire prevention message and what they can do for you. Remember, this is a potential opportunity to increase the effectiveness of your fire prevention efforts. Work on building a team that tackles one aspect of your fire prevention program. Many groups cannot only provide individuals to assist with fire prevention efforts but may also be able to help with projects financially. Approach these presentations with an open mind; your ideas may not be the only way to tackle fire prevention issues. Present positive messages during your presentations!

Staff should respond to requests as quickly as possible and programs should be presented as workload allows. Do not rely solely on requests to determine what wildfire prevention programs you schedule. After determining your prevention

priorities, seek out groups with important and appropriate wildfire prevention messages. Schedule presentations with these groups at times that are convenient for them, and make sure they are in acceptable locations. Staff should plan on bringing adequate handouts or other materials to supplement their presentation. Presentations should be approached with the thought that these groups may be able to help you in your fire prevention efforts.

Fairs and Other Civic Activities

Fairs attract large numbers of people and offer an excellent opportunity to present both fire prevention and forest management messages. Take advantage of these opportunities as they present themselves in your areas of fire management responsibility as budget and workload priorities allow. Don't be afraid to be creative when considering opportunities. Smokey Bear throwing out the first pitch at a youth league baseball game may be an excellent way to deliver a simple fire prevention message. This potentially also imparts a positive message about the Department of Natural Resources. Never pass up an opportunity to shine a positive light on the Division of Forestry, the positive activities we are involved with and the assistance we provide to the public and other agencies. In addition to displays, consider utilizing special appearances at fairs. An appearance by Smokey Bear (always a hit with the children), a fully outfitted wildland firefighter, or a team of firefighters including local volunteer and DNR firefighters can be effective. Equipment displays, if space allows, typically attract attention and will offer you the opportunity to deliver a prevention message. Consider using Powerpoint programs if space does not allow for suppression equipment.

Assignments to arrange for and supervise events of statewide significance, such as the State Fair, shall be directed by the Division Administrator.

Accomplishment Reporting

Accomplishment reporting is done on a district level and on a quarterly basis. These accomplishment reports are used annually in work planning as well as determining success of any wildfire prevention program.

SMOKEY BEAR GUIDANCE

Image & Appearance

The key to Smokey's worldwide recognition is credited to the positive image that has been promoted since the inception of the program. Uniform standards have been identified for all aspects of Smokey's image, from drawings to the manufacture of the costume to public appearances.

Artwork

Only Smokey Bear artwork, approved and dated by the Director, Fire & Aviation Management, Washington Office, may be used. Reproductions of existing art may not be approved. WHEN IN DOUBT CHECK IT OUT! Glossy black-and-white and color prints of the official photograph may also be obtained from the Director. Only use specific Pantone matching system acceptable colors for use on Smokey Bear artwork.

Smokey Appearances

Smokey Bear appearance requests should be evaluated and prioritized as work and time allows. Smokey appearances during times of higher fire danger should be strongly considered, especially in Fire Landscapes 4, 7, 9 and 15. Utilizing fire departments for Smokey appearances is a partnership that should be encouraged.

The following are guidelines for all Smokey appearances:

1. Accompanying all Smokey appearances, should be a local fire prevention message.
2. Smokey school program visits should be limited to grades K-3.
3. Keep Smokey's image and message traditional.

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4. The person wearing the costume must exhibit appropriate animation to be effective. Express sincerity and interest in the appearance by moving paws, head and legs.
5. There shall be at least one uniformed escort to accompany Smokey. "Smokey's Helper" vests have been created for this use. The escort shall guide Smokey at the elbow.
6. After donning the costume, the escort shall inspect the suit. Check for the following:
 - a. Is the drawstring tucked in?
 - b. Is the zipper out of sight?
 - c. Are the buttons fastened?
 - d. Is the belt firmly fastened to the pants?
 - e. Are the pant cuffs neat?
 - f. Is the hat crown up?
 - g. Is the head straight on the shoulders?
 - h. Is the fur brushed generously?
7. A private dressing room is necessary for putting on and taking off the costume.
8. The costumed bear should not force itself on anyone. Do not walk rapidly toward small children.
9. A round-point shovel is part of the Smokey Bear image. It shall be used for appearances, when appropriate.
10. The costume becomes hot to the wearer after a very short period. Success has been noted with the use of compartmentalized vests, "Blue Ice" and the addition of a battery-operated fan in the hat. Several cooling options are available from the costume manufacturers. Limit appearances to 15-20 minute segments to minimize personal discomfort.

After each appearance, check the costume for needed repairs or cleaning. Note this on the outside of the storage box for immediate follow-up by the owner/manager of the costume.

Costume

Effective uses of the Smokey Bear costumes are for parades and for appearances at schools, fairs, youth-group meetings, conservation activities, television appearances, sporting events, civic and community events, trade and trademark shows, and similar functions where a fire prevention message can be conveyed.

Examples of inappropriate uses are: Christmas parties, summer picnics, Halloween parties, job fairs, charity campaigns, or any situation that might compromise Smokey's integrity or give the appearance of impropriety.

There are two licensed companies that administer the official Smokey Bear costume. Both of these companies can facilitate purchases of costumes and repairs.

Facemakers, Inc.
140 Fifth Street
Savanna, IL 61074
<http://www.facemakersincorporated.com/>

Shafton, Inc.
6932 Tujunga Avenue
North Hollywood, CA 91605
<http://www.shaftoninc.com/>

Costume Acquisition and Use

Only USDA Forest Service and State Forestry agencies may purchase costumes without prior approval. On a case-by-case basis the Director, Fire & Aviation Management, through the Regional/Area Coordinators, approves

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costume ownership by other Federal and international agencies. Local fire departments and other fire protection organizations may be granted permission to purchase a costume after State Forester approval.

Existing costumes owned by the Department may be loaned out to trusted organizations (i.e., fire departments, Tribes, etc.) for wildfire prevention purposes. Guidelines and checklist for loaning out the costume can be found within the [Loaned Smokey Costume Memorandum of Understanding](#). This will ensure the costume is utilized properly, kept in good condition and returned to the proper owner or station.

Individuals who wear and use the costume must agree to:

1. Use the costume only to further public information, education, and awareness of the prevention of wildfires.
2. NOT SPEAK during appearances. Conversations or explanations should be carried out by the accompanying official escort.
3. Never appear in less than full costume.
4. Remain anonymous at every appearance and in any publicity connected with an appearance. This includes being photographed without the head.
5. Use only costumes that are clean, complete and in good condition.
6. Keep costume out-of-sight before and after use.
7. Appear dignified and friendly. Avoid clowning and horseplay.
8. Always be accompanied by an appropriately uniformed escort in public appearances, except where not practical, such as on a parade float where space is limited.
9. Refrain from using alcohol or drugs prior to and during the Smokey Bear appearance. This condition applies to escorts as well.

Care and Maintenance

The owner/manager of the costume shall assure that:

1. The Smokey costume is not used unless it is clean, complete and in good repair. Ideally, the costume should be dry-cleaned. Laundering is permitted according to manufacturer's specifications. If the suit is not cleaned after several hours of use it will begin to smell and cause deterioration that will shorten the life expectancy.
2. The costume is inspected after each use and any required maintenance is performed.
3. The costume is not placed into the costume box wet. Thoroughly air-dry the suit first.
4. The manufacturer's recommendations for proper placement of the components into the storage box are followed.
5. Costumes can be returned to their respective manufacturers for maintenance, refurbishment and repair. Contact the manufacturer for price quotations.

Security and Disposal

Protect the Smokey Bear costume from theft, vandalism, and to eliminate unauthorized use, which may result in bad publicity and immeasurable harm to the integrity of Smokey as a symbol of wildfire prevention.

1. Keep the Smokey Bear costume under lock-and-key when it is not in use.
2. Use a sign-in/sign-out system to control costume use.

3. Mark the costume box to say, "Warning: Unauthorized use or possession of this costume is not permitted."
4. Immediately report thefts of Smokey Bear costumes to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and request prompt action to assure recovery.
5. When it is determined by the owner/manager that the costume is no longer fit to wear and must be disposed of, the suit shall be rendered unrecognizable as a Smokey Bear costume by cutting, tearing, and/or burning all components.

Trademark Protection

The respected and recognized name of Smokey Bear and his well-known message, as well as the property rights in the trademark and the service mark are valued. There is an important need to distinguish Smokey Bear, his message, information and education materials, advertising and commercially licensed products from those of other symbols; and to prevent their improper use. To accomplish this requires vigorous protection. The benefit to this position is that integrity is maintained, and is reflected back to the sponsoring organizations.

MEDIA RELATIONS

The goal of DNR media relations is to provide clear, accurate and timely information to media representatives, stakeholders and the general public on issues affecting public and environmental health, natural resources and environmental management policies. For a more detailed overview of media relations procedures and policies within the Department, please refer to the [Office of Communications Intranet site](#).

General Policy for Release of Information and Public Notice

Preparing and releasing news to the media is an important Department function. It is the quickest way to reach the largest possible number of state residents. News releases and media contacts are made for a variety of purposes. These usually are to inform, to educate or to notify Wisconsin citizens about our environment and resource-related activities. Because of the DNR's regulatory responsibilities, some of the information we release to the media is sensitive – especially in areas of public health, policy and law enforcement.

The Department issues news in several ways utilizing traditional and social media outlets. The flagship publications of the DNR are two weekly products: the Wisconsin DNR Weekly News, a packet of news releases; and the Outdoor Report, an electronic round-up of current statewide conditions as reported by on-site observers. The Weekly News is distributed to more than 21,000 subscribers, including more than 1,000 newspaper, radio and television outlets across Wisconsin and along the Minnesota, Illinois and Michigan borders. An online signup is available through DNR.wi.gov on the [Weekly News](#) page that allows anyone to subscribe. Publishing this packet helps us keep the public informed of Department activities and events affecting Wisconsin's environment natural resources.

The second weekly publication, The Outdoor Report, also is a news packet of reviews of regional weather, field conditions and natural events.

The Department also issues many news releases outside the normal weekly news packet schedule when situations and timing warrant. Some releases are distributed only to local news media while others are distributed statewide.

Most of the releases also are released on the DNR's Twitter feed and sometimes on the DNR's Facebook page. The Twitter feed, Facebook page and LinkedIn pages also are used for independent messages – such as feature photos or a special event. The DNR also communicates to the media and the general public through the DNR's YouTube account, Flickr site and Pinterest.

If you have Department information that may be news, contact a regional or central office public affairs manager to help you assess the topic's news value and to determine if the news should be released immediately to local or statewide news outlets or included in the weekly news packet. Social media questions can go directly to the social media coordinator, housed within the Office of Communications.

Central Office News Releases

All central office news releases must be forwarded by programs through the Office of Communications and to the Secretary's Office for approval. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for approving draft releases. At a minimum, central office news releases must be approved by:

1. The Bureau of Forest Protection Director or designee
2. The Office of Communications; and
3. The Secretary's Office

It is important to keep the Division of Forestry Administrator informed of all press releases.

Regional News Releases

Regional and Office of Communications public affairs managers are available to coordinate and to assist with media contacts. Public affairs managers have authority to recommend whether to issue news releases or to contact the media, to determine the timing and format of public release of news and to edit news releases for clarity and journalistic standards. Public affairs managers or their designees are responsible for securing approval for and coordinating the distribution of news releases originating from the regions and central office.

Many field employees write columns for local newspapers and these columns require a signoff process similar to that for news releases. Staff interested in doing recurring radio or tv interviews and proactive media outreach should work with their regional or program public affairs managers to gain prior approval. Ultimately, these efforts develop trust and show the Department's willingness to share information and respond to requests from the media and citizens.

When responding to routine media requests for information that falls within your area of expertise, you don't need prior approval to conduct an interview. Examples of routine information are questions about burning regulations, burn permits, fire danger and safe burning practices. However, you do need to make sure you are using talking points or sharing messages that are consistent throughout your program. Upon completion of an interview, all media contacts require a brief contact report that should be emailed to DNR DL OC ALL with a cc to your supervisors and bureau directors. Include the following details:

1. reporter's name & media outlet
2. reporter's questions and your answers
3. any follow-up needed and when the story will print or air
4. your name, title and program.

If you are asked to participate in news conferences, live radio or call-in shows, television interviews or print interviews on topics or issues that you know or suspect are controversial either locally or statewide or involve policy development, please get the request details and contact your supervisor and Office of Communications before accepting the invite.

Incident Command System

If a fire or other event is large or complex enough to trigger activation of an Incident Management Team, that team will include a Public Information Officer (PIO). Once the PIO is on the scene and briefed by the Incident Commander, the PIO will manage all media contacts and information requests from that point forward. If you are involved in a response of this type, please forward all media requests to the PIO on the scene.

Regional Public Affairs Managers

For a current list of public affairs staff, visit: <http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/caer/ce/>

Media Contact Reporting Policy

Inquiries from reporters and editors are excellent indicators of public interest. As a department, DNR makes every effort to answer media inquiries in an accurate and timely manner, though receiving a call from a reporter does not necessarily mean you will be the one to complete the interview. Staff should only respond to media inquiries on a local level on topics that are of a non-sensitive manner. All other media requests should be referred to the local public affairs manager or Office of Communications.

Department employees are encouraged to participate in information activities that contribute to a better understanding of the Department, its duties and functions. Employees are advised not to provide only factual answers and never speculate or respond to hypothetical questions. Employees are responsible for the factual accuracy of any information provided.

Be aware that reporters often operate on a tight deadline. When you are contacted by the media and asked to respond to questions outside your area of expertise, take a few minutes to help the reporter find an appropriate Department contact. If your phone is equipped to allow it, invite the reporter to stay on the line as you track down an appropriate contact.

High profile media contacts involving news outlets with a statewide presence or sensitive topics must be referred to the designated spokesman or the Office of Communications. High profile media contacts must be reported following the procedures noted above whether or not you are the designated spokesperson and able to conduct the interview. This allows the Office of Communications to track incoming inquiries on breaking news and high profile stories.

Reports appearing in print or on broadcast media often generate more inquiries. For this reason, it is important to share the nature of media contacts with other programs and managers to help others prepare for possible calls.

News Release Format

The Department has a standard news release format. Regional and central office public affairs managers can assist in placing news in the standard format and in editing copy to comply with accepted Associated Press style standards.

At a minimum, if possible, all published news releases should clearly indicate:

1. The news is coming from the Department of Natural Resources
2. The date
3. If possible, at least two contacts with phone numbers

Typical Questions from Media

- What is the #1 cause of wildfires in Wisconsin?
- When does Wisconsin traditionally experience “fire season?”
- How many wildfires are there in your county each year?
- What is the difference between a structure fire and a wildland fire?
- Are burning permits required for burning leaves and brush?
- What is legal to burn?
- When is the best time of day to burn? What is the best time of year to burn?
- What do I need to keep my fire safe? Do I need tools, water, etc.?

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- Do I need to stay with my fire until it burns down a little?
- What can I do to teach my kids about fire safety?
- Is burning my only option to get rid of leaves, twigs and brush?
- I still have my burning barrel. Can I still burn my garbage in it?
- If my fire escapes my control and I have a burning permit, why do I get a bill?
- I was burning leaves in my campfire ring. How come I got a citation for burning without a permit?
- My neighbors are always sitting by their campfire day and night. Why don't they need a permit?

Sample News Release

NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

101 S Webster, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707

Phone: (608)266-6790 TDD: (608)267-6897

dnr.wi.gov

Wisconsin.gov

DATE: Release in the March 25, 2003 DBR News & Outdoor Report
CONTACT: Catherine Koele, DNR Wildfire Prevention Specialist – (608)266-2359
Bill Baumann, Air Management Engineer – (608)267-7542
SUBJECT: *High fire danger makes debris burning a bad idea this spring*
State officials urge people to compost, not burn, yard waste

MADISON – Spring time in Wisconsin usually means a thorough yard cleaning, but Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources officials are urging people to consider alternatives to burning yard waste, branches, leaves and the like, especially this year when Wisconsin is entering one of its driest spring seasons in years.

Debris burning is the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin and accounts for roughly one-third of all wildfires in the state. These fires can quickly get out of control and, especially in the spring before grass turn green, can burn hundreds of acres and even building and other structures before they are brought under control.

On Monday, March 24th, a debris fire that smoldered for a few days touched off a 149-acre blaze four miles east of Siren in Burnett County in northwest Wisconsin. Much of the fuel for the blaze was in the form of downed trees from a tornado that ravaged the area two years ago. Eleven fire departments from Burnett, Polk and Washburn counties, area foresters and St. Croix Tribe firefighters helped contain the fire, sparing 25 area lake homes from damage.

“Homeowners and landowners have a big financial incentive to not start wildfires,” said Catherine Koele, DNR Wildfire Prevention Specialist. “Anyone found responsible for causing a wildfire on state, federal or private lands is liable for all costs associated with fighting the fire and the damage to the state’s natural resources.”

Burning permits – which are free – are required in many areas of the state. People who want to burn should contact their local DNR office, emergency fire warden, fire department or local officials before burning to find out if a burning permit is required.

For those cleaning out attics and garages, tossing a match onto a pile of burnables may seem like the easy way to get rid of them, but burning just about any material, whether plastic, paper or wood, produces a variety of hazardous and toxic air pollutants, including carcinogens like arsenic, benzene and formaldehyde.

State law prohibits the burning of the following materials under any conditions:

1. wet, combustible rubbish, such as wet cardboard or paper
2. oily substances, such as oily or greasy rags, oil filters, etc.
3. asphalt, such as asphalt shingles or tar paper
4. plastics of any kind, including plastic bottles and plastic bags
5. rubber products, including tires and hoses
6. treated or painted wood

DNR encourages everyone to consider alternatives to outdoor burning such as reducing the amount of waste produced, recycling, landfilling or composting yard waste and brush.

“If you do burn, make sure you have the proper permit and don’t burn illegal materials,” Regan said. “You should also have a plan ready just in case your fire gets out of control. And, keep in mind, your local DNR staff is there to answer your questions or address your concerns.”

[More Sample Press Releases](#)

FIRE PREVENTION AWARDS

Recognition of outstanding service is important in a comprehensive wildfire prevention program. There are several ways to accomplish this goal.

Wisconsin Recognition

1. "Smokey Bear Citations" (velum) – given for outstanding service to wildfire prevention of local or district wide scope and effect over and above normal coverage or activity in wildfire prevention matters. These awards are available through the [National Symbols Cache](#).
2. "Wisconsin Award- Certificate of Recognition" – given for outstanding service to wildfire prevention of a statewide scope and effect over an extended period of time. These awards are available from local area dispatch offices.

Smokey Bear citations and Wisconsin Awards are available to individuals outside of the Department who are outstanding in one or more wildfire prevention activities. Emergency Fire Wardens, newspapers, radio and TV stations, local groups or organizations are examples of candidates.

In order to keep the award's status at a desirable level, the acts or instances should be truly significant. This is not to make them unattainable, however. Fire management personnel wishing to recognize individuals for such service should draft a memo and indicate the outstanding service and route to the area leader for approval. Consider utilizing this opportunity to enhance the fire prevention message and present the award during the spring to generate interest with local media.

Regional Recognition

1. Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact (GLFFC) Fire Prevention Awards – These are presented annually by the GLFFC to recognize individuals and organizations that have provided outstanding contributions to wildfire prevention. Nomination forms and the details of the nomination process are available on the [GLFFC website](#). The GLFFC Prevention Committee reviews the nominees at their winter meeting and recommends to the GLFFC Executive Committee those who should receive the award. Awards are presented locally at appropriately identified events.
2. “Eugene F. McNamara Award”—The Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors administers this award to honor an individual or organization that has provided outstanding service in the field of wildfire prevention within an

individual State or group of States in the Northeast Area. A letter, not more than 500 words, is to be sent to Maureen Brooks, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Fire Prevention Specialist, by email: mtbrooks@fs.fed.us. Nominations are due in the spring and the award is presented at the annual Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors meeting in June.

National Recognition

The “National Smokey Bear Award” shall be given as part of the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) program to prevent human-caused wildfires, in recognition of outstanding and significant contributions to the program. A uniform standard for awards will apply to both states and federal agencies. Five awards are approved: Golden Smokey statuette, Silver Smokey statuette, Bronze Smokey statuette, Smokey Bear citation and Smokey Bear appreciation award.

Eligibility

Awards will be made to organizations or persons who have, during the preceding specified period, rendered an outstanding and effective contribution to the cause of forest or range fire prevention. Law enforcement activities that prevent wildfires shall be considered. Prevention activities related to fires in buildings or urban developments do not qualify for CFFP awards.

Award Categories

Awards will be made in the following general categories:

1. Business and Industry – Commercial advertising agencies, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, Smokey Bear licenses, wood-using industries, banking associations, etc.
2. Conservation, Fraternal, Civic, Professional and Government Organizations – Conservation and wildlife groups, women's clubs, Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Society of American Foresters, government agencies, etc.
3. Educational, Religious and Youth Groups – Parents and teachers groups, church groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, etc.

Nominations

Nominations should be 500 words or less, typewritten and double spaced. The nomination shall include a concise description of the service rendered or contribution made, and shall show the name, address and affiliation of the nominator. Newspaper clippings, photographs, magazine articles, or other material may be attached to a nomination. More information on these awards is available through the [National Symbols Cache](#).

Kinds of Awards:

1. “Golden Smokey” statuette
Given For: Outstanding service to forest fire prevention of national scope and effect over an extended period of time.
Given To: Organizations and agencies with nationwide activities and/or influence.
2. “Silver Smokey” statuette
Given For: Outstanding service to forest fire prevention over an extended period of time.
Given To: Persons with nationwide and/or regional activities and/or influence.
3. “Bronze Smokey” statuette
Given For: Outstanding service to forest fire prevention of state or region-wide scope and effect over past two years.
Given To: Organizations, agencies, and persons with state or region-wide activities and/or influence.
4. Smokey Bear Citation
Given For: Outstanding service to forest fire prevention of less than statewide scope and effect over past two years.

Given To: Organizations, agencies and persons.

5. Smokey Appreciation Award

Given For: Significant service to forest fire prevention within a local area over past year.

Given To: Organizations, agencies or persons.

DATES OF INTEREST

Prevention Week

The Great Lakes Wildfire Prevention Week has been identified as being the third full week in April every year. Although it is typically during peak fire season, it is encouraged to promote this week locally by having events, making appearances and boosting overall fire prevention and awareness during this time.

National Prevention Week

National Fire Prevention week is identified by the anniversary of The Great Peshtigo Fire of October 8th, 1871. Although this week typically focuses on structural fire, it's a great opportunity to tie in both messages. Many forest rangers and technicians perform their Smokey school programs during this week.

Smokey's Birthday

The official birthday of Smokey Bear is Aug. 9, 1944. Consider working with partners such as libraries, fire departments, schools, youth groups and other organizations to assist in local efforts (i.e., birthday party) to promote fire prevention messages.

Firewise Recognition

The Firewise program has instituted Firewise Toasts and National Wildfire Preparedness days for local communities to promote wildland fire preparedness and planning efforts. For more information on these dates of interest, visit the [Firewise](#) website.

PREVENTION MATERIALS

Publications

Numerous publications are available to assist staff with spreading wildfire prevention messages. A complete list of available publications and ordering information can be found on the [Publications intranet site](#).

Intranet/Internet Resources

The [Forest Fire Protection Internet site](#) is a great place to explore when looking for available information regarding burning permits, firefighter assistance and prevention and safety for our external customers. The pages contain quick links to the most visited pages within the fire program, such as the current fire danger and burning permit restrictions. Other topics include the online burning permit, EFW locations, protecting property, wildfire history in Wisconsin, and current fire statistics.

The [Division's Fire Prevention Communication Plan](#) is an internal toolbox for Forestry staff to assist with local fire prevention and wildland urban interface efforts. Within the kit, staff can access education and outreach ideas, advertisements, relevant websites, public service announcement downloads, graphics, descriptions of available displays, and examples of children's activities.

The [Burning Questions intranet site](#) is an internal toolbox to assist DNR personnel (Customer Service, Forestry, Air & Waste, Law Enforcement) with any questions associated with burning permit regulations and open burning concerns raised by the public.

Materials/Resources

Guidelines for promotional materials:

- Keep promotional material giveaways unique to appropriate fire management and fire prevention events and programs.
- Minimize giveaways provided to other programs within the DNR where fire staff and a fire message is not represented.
- Consider creating good quality, low-cost products with a message specific to Wisconsin. The products could coincide with the theme for Wildfire Prevention Week.
- Funding for smaller local events should come from local operational budgets.
- Funding to purchase materials for larger events that have statewide or regional impact should not come out of local operational budgets and could be supplemented by Hazard Mitigation as funding allows.
- When the Central Office has limited supply of materials, priority should fall on areas within DNR organized protection according to fire landscape/fire risk.

National Symbols Cache

The most cost efficient materials for prevention related events are from the [National Symbols Cache](#). You order direct (using a p-card only) and delivery is within a few days, as long as items are in stock. Shipping costs are included in the price.

Firewise Items

Firewise items can be found on the [NFPA website](#) (click on Catalog and Wildfire Safety). The catalog contains publications, DVDs, reference books and much more. Items in the catalog are appropriate for firefighters, homeowners, builders, landscapers, planners and teachers.

Other Vendors to Consider

- [Woodland Enterprises](#)
- [National Association of State Foresters](#)
- [Smokey Signals](#)

Displays

[Displays](#) are available from a number of locations, with dispatch offices and Division of Forestry specialists (Fire Prevention, Wildland Urban Interface, Forestry Education, LeMay Forestry Center) being common contacts. Displays are an excellent way to deliver simple messages that do not require constant staffing by DNR personnel. Localize displays whenever possible.

WILDFIRE PREVENTION SIGNS

This is a comprehensive sign plan for the Division of Forestry, wildfire prevention program and will provide the framework for managing an effective sign program.

Signs & Posters

Wildfire prevention posters and signs are seasonal notices. When used correctly, these can be an economical and effective method of reaching targeted audiences with timely messages. Poorly maintained or outdated signs are ineffective and can leave the public with a poor impression of their public and private land managers. In order to ensure consistent fire prevention messaging, any custom signs, including modifications to fire danger rating signs, must be approved by the Fire Prevention Specialist Team prior to production.

Ordering Signs

Approved signs can be ordered through Order Tracking and Inventory Control (OTIC) or from the LeMay stockroom.

For a complete listing of various available posters and inventories, contact the Fire Prevention Specialist or the Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator.

Typical Fire Prevention messages:

- General Awareness Messages (i.e., Smokey Bear)
- Fire Danger Rating (i.e., Low, Moderate, High, Very High, Extreme)
- Seasonal Messages (i.e., fireworks)
- Emergency Use (i.e., Emergency Burning Restrictions, Red Flag Warnings)
- Prolonged significant fire risk (i.e., drought, state of emergency)

Sign Placement

When installing signs, it's important to check with Department of Transportation, County Highway Department or township for any restrictions or permit requirements.

Potential sign locations:

- DNR offices: ranger stations, service centers, parks & state forest offices
- Frequently used travel routes (waysides, tourism, kiosks, etc.)
- Local businesses (bait shops, gas stations, restaurants, hardware stores, sporting goods stores, etc.)
- Schools & libraries
- Locations of recreational bulletin boards including boat launches, camping sites and ATV trails.
- Emergency Fire Warden locations

Installation & Maintenance

When installing a poster or sign, remove existing staples or nails. The signs should be centered and square to the sign board. Consider stenciling the backing board with a Smokey logo or generic prevention message so if the poster is removed there still is a prevention message shown.

Replace posters that have been defaced or otherwise damaged. Replace posters when they are no longer needed or when the message is no longer applicable and timely. For instance, a wildfire message left out during winter portrays a careless image and the effectiveness of this message is lost during fire season.

Emergency Burning Restrictions and Red Flag Warning poster locations should be pre-determined or mapped, and should be in-place to concur with the order and promptly removed when the order is rescinded. The same goes for seasonal messages such as "No Fireworks" and the July 4th holiday. These posters should be in-place and replaced in a timely fashion.

In addition to maintaining the appearance and readability of the poster the sign board and post will need maintenance. Remove weeds, brush, and other obstacles that obstruct the visibility or detract from the message and a positive image.

Fire Danger Rating Signs

The purpose of a fire danger rating sign is to relay to the public what the fire danger is for a particular period of time, usually daily. One of five adjectives (Low, Moderate, High, Very High or Extreme) is displayed on the sign to represent the fire danger for that day. Since these signs relay a time sensitive message, it is critical that the signs be updated daily to accurately reflect the existing fire danger for that day. Area forestry leaders should annually remind staff to maintain fire danger sign currency year-round. The sign adjective should also correspond to the fire danger adjective listed on the DNR website.

To help facilitate the workload associated with keeping the signs updated, consider the following:

1. Place signs near DNR stations eliminating travel time to update.
2. Limit the number of fire danger signs per FRU so keeping them updated daily in relation to other workload is

realistic.

3. Place signs at businesses/partner locations that are willing to update the sign daily. This is done after the DNR notifies them of the change in fire danger. Examples of such places are EFWs, fire departments, gas stations, banks, sport/bait shops or other state agencies.

If circumstances change so that a sign is no longer able to be updated daily, it should be removed and relocated to a location where it can be. It is more important to have the sign relaying the correct message than it is to have a sign in a particular area. If a partner owns a sign, it's important to work with them to maintain consistent messaging and relationship. Stress the importance of the message and how it reflects upon us.

The DNR has partnered with Department of Transportation (DOT) and outlined procedures and maintenance of DNR fire danger rating signs within highway right-of-ways and the use of DOT electronic message boards through a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU). The MOU defines the use of these signs for fire prevention purposes.

Therefore, existing DNR-managed fire danger rating signs located in State highway right-of-ways require notification to be entered into DOT's sign inventory. Any new sign locations within the right-of-way must be approved by the DOT, may be subject to permits and breakaway standards and need to have sign owners name indicated on the sign. It is important to record **all** the required information listed below for **all** DNR-managed fire danger rating signs at the local area level. Any new fire danger signs that are installed within the area should be reported to the dispatcher who will maintain a database of sign locations on an annual basis for fire prevention planning purposes and for notification to DOT of any applicable updates.

Fire danger rating sign inventory data collection includes:

- The sign owner's name & address
- Sign installer's name & address
- Landowner's name & address
- Municipality (city, town, village)
- County name
- GPS coordinates (decimal degrees, i.e.: 44.5078 x -89.5515)
- Direction of sign face (N, S, E, W)
- What side of the road the sign is located (L, R)
- Quadrant
- Section, township, range numbers
- Zoning
- Sign type (V, back-to-back, single-sided)
- Located within highway right of way (Y or N)
- Condition of sign (Poor, Fair, Good)
- Date added to inventory (i.e.: when a change is made to the inventory list)

EMERGENCY FIRE WARDENS (EFWS)

Due to safety concerns, workload constraints, and the options of getting a burning permit online and over the phone, efforts to phase out residential EFWs began in 2012. Some residential EFWs will remain in locations where cultural reasons prevent local community members from using motor vehicles, accessing the Internet, or using the phone **and** where the nearest business EFW or DNR office is more than 5 miles from the community. Remaining residential EFWs will not be posted to the external Internet database. Those EFWs who issue permits from their home (e.g., during tax time) should indicate the Town Hall address and contact information.

Recruitment

1. EFW recruitment will occur only in a place of business identified as a geographic necessity. Area forestry leaders can give approval to recruit a residential EFW due to cultural reasons.

2. Every effort should be made to recruit businesses who are dependable and who will act in a manner that is favorable to the entire Division.
3. Since permit writing is the most essential part of an EFW's duties, a business willing and able to perform this task should be sought.
4. No person should be recommended for EFW credentials who are under 18 years of age. The maximum age should be determined by the person's physical and mental ability to function as an EFW.
5. The number of EFWs within an area will be determined by the area forestry leader.

Credentials

In order for the Department to meet the requirements of section [26.12\(3\)](#), Wis. Stats., the following procedures will govern the issuance of EFW credentials.

State statutes require a person intending to set fire in DNR forest protection areas of the state to receive "written permission in advance from a duly appointed fire warden." These statutes were written when face to face contact with a fire warden was the only means of receiving this "written permission." Today, "written permission" can be granted electronically with the use of computers, cell phones, tablets and other devices.

The "Department" is vested with the authority to appoint fire wardens for this purpose. As such the Division of Forestry, Bureau of Forest Protection is the controlling body for burning restrictions and permits and thusly determines when and where burning can occur within DNR forest protection areas on a daily basis.

By virtue of their positions, Division of Forestry staff and Customer Service staff have been appointed the authority to issue written permission both in person and through electronic media under the guidance of the Bureau of Forest Protection without the need for specific fire warden credentials.

Regular EFW Credentials

1. Issued to externals (business or remaining residential EFWs), who have no other law enforcement credentials to enable them to function for the Department to protect them from liability pursuant to Chapter 26, Wis. Stats. These credentials are limited to only issuing handwritten annual burn permits (Form 4300-125).
2. List of regular EFW credential holders needs to be submitted to county boards annually in the spring. Credentials must be updated annually.
3. All business EFW's will be issued Emergency Fire Warden Credentials, Form 9100-054. The credentials should be issued to the owner or manager of the business with reference to "Doing Business As" or "D.B.A." See example on the following page.

Fire Management Handbook

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

«FRU»

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:
KNOW YE, That reposing special trust and confidence in the integrity and ability of «Name», and/or doing business as «Business Name», we do hereby appoint and constitute that person an

EMERGENCY FIRE WARDEN

for «County» County for the State of Wisconsin, and do authorize and empower that person to execute and fulfill the duties of that office, according to Chapter 26 of the Statutes (laws relating to forest fires) during good behavior and the faithful performance of duties for the year Year. This credential limits the authority of the appointee to the issuance of annual burn permits. (Form 4300-125)

This appointment is validated in the Municipality of «Location», Wisconsin this Day day of Month Year. «Next Record»

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

By _____
Area Forestry Leader

Form 9100-54

Rev. 8/14

- 4. The Regular Emergency Fire Warden Credential (Form 9100-54) is located in E-forms as a Word document.
- 5. Upon appointment as a business EFW, the Letter for Businesses must be presented to the business owner on an annual basis; the letter will reflect any new information related to the burning permit system for the upcoming year. Copies of these letters will be maintained by the area dispatcher.

See Example:

-SAMPLE LETTER TO BUSINESS OWNERS/MANAGERS ACTING AS EMERGENCY FIRE WARDENS-

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your service as a duly appointed DNR Emergency Fire Warden for the State of Wisconsin. This is your annual refresher along with your updated Emergency Fire Warden Credential cards. This authorization is valid for the calendar year as long as the credential holder is employed by the business referenced in this letter.

You have indicated that you and your business are willing to issue Annual Burn Permits (Form 4300-125) on our behalf. As the business owner or manager, it is your responsibility to identify burning permit administrators and educate your staff on the current process involved in burning permit issuance. Failure to do so will lead to the loss of your Emergency Fire Warden Credential. This is in pursuant to Section 26.12(5)(a) (or (b), if in extensive) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

[Insert any new information here such as references to new publications, website updates or changes to burning permit policy or procedure. For any new guidance, consult the Fire Prevention Specialist.]

Business Name (print)

Signature of Emergency Fire Warden (owner or manager)

Date

Special EFW Credentials

1. Issued to internal DNR staff who have authority to write special burn permits (foresters, technicians and dispatchers)
2. Requests for special EFW credentials should be directed to the area leader.
3. Special EFW credentials are not submitted to county boards.
4. Special credentials will be issued upon employee appointment for the duration of their tenure. In turn, if employee position duties change, the credentials are no longer valid.
5. Special burn permits should include a site inspection prior to issuance; agency partners may conduct the site inspection on our behalf, but the permit must be approved and signed by Special Credentialed DNR staff. Note: Agency partners would require Regular EFW credentials to issue handwritten annual burn permits.
6. The Special Emergency Fire Warden Credential (Form 9100-56) is located in E-forms as a Word document.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

«FRU»
To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:
KNOW YE, That reposing special trust and confidence in
the integrity and ability of «NAME» of the county of
«County» we do hereby appoint and constitute that person a

SPECIAL EMERGENCY FIRE WARDEN

For a term beginning **Date**
And ending upon change in duties within the fire program.

This person is hereby authorized and empowered to execute
and fulfill the duties of that office, specifically pertaining to the
issuance of special burn permits, according to Chapter 26 of
the Statutes (laws relating to forest fires) during good
behavior and the faithful performance of these duties. The
Department of Natural Resources may revoke these
credentials at any time it is deemed advisable.

This appointment is validated within organized DNR
protection areas on this **Day** day of **Month, Year**.

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

By _____
Area Forestry Supervisor

Form 9100-56 Rev. 8/14

Training

Upon EFW recruitment, or as an annual refresher, individual instruction should be given by local credentialed Forestry staff. These instructions should cover the following topics:

1. Providing permit books
2. Providing EFW with proper credentials and updated letter to businesses
3. Explaining the permit writing process and the importance of referencing daily checks on the hotline and Internet site
4. Furnishing EFW with supporting publications or literature
5. Maintaining copies of written permits to assist with law enforcement and reporting systems
6. Burning permit issuance within organized DNR protection areas

Fire Management Handbook

7. Open burning rules (legal versus illegal materials)
8. Importance of maintaining a professional image on behalf of the DNR
9. Preparing EFW to answer questions about burn location (DNR Protection areas versus Cooperative areas)
10. Furnishing telephone list of relevant DNR fire personnel in the area
11. Referencing website address if computer/internet available

Maintenance

1. Consider reducing the number of business EFWs based upon proximity, (e.g., two EFWs on the same street should be avoided).
2. Within each area, determine a minimum set of standards to justify the need for business EFWs over a geographical area, based on overall number of permits issued.
3. Ensure that EFWs have proper signage, that it is posted in a visible location and properly maintained.
4. Copies of all handwritten regular burn permits must be retained for 1 year (after the initial creation year) or until legal proceedings are completed, and must be collected at the end of the calendar year; this will be utilized for the Quarterly Accomplishment Reporting System.
5. Copies of all handwritten special burn permits must be retained for 4 years (after the initial creation year) and must be collected at the end of the calendar year; this will be utilized for the Quarterly Accomplishment Reporting System.

Forester/Forest Ranger Responsibilities

1. Maintains relationships with EFW's and updates local contact information within Fire Response Unit.
2. Completes annual refresher (e.g., delivers permit books, publications, credentials and letter to businesses, etc.).
3. Compiles a list of EFWs in the Fire Response Unit and submits to area dispatcher by January 1st of each year.
4. Maintains a running total of the number of handwritten burning permits by Fire Response Unit for each EFW and ensures the data are entered in the quarterly reporting system or as specified. This information will be utilized in the EFW evaluation process.
5. Upon site inspection, approves or denies all Special Burn permits as requested within Fire Response Unit.

Area Dispatcher Responsibilities

1. Combines lists received from foresters/forest rangers on spreadsheet by area.
2. Supplies list or link to online database at dnr.wi.gov enter keyword "fire warden" on a county basis and submits to the respective county board or its designated committee before Feb. 1 of each year for approval.
 - a. If the list of EFWs is sent to the county via the online database link and the county has additional residential EFW's, those EFWs must be sent in written form.
 - b. The county board returns approved list to the area by Feb. 28th.
 - c. If the list is not returned from the county board by Feb. 28th, the list as originally submitted shall become the official list.
3. Each area will ensure that a current list of active business EFW names and addresses is on the master EFW list located on the Fire Drive by March 15th of each year

4. Prevention specialist will coordinate the master list upload with appropriate IT staff starting in March and each subsequent month thereafter during fire season.
5. If changes to a fire warden occur after the above deadlines, updates should continue to be made to the master EFW list. Simply notify the Prevention Specialist of these changes so periodic updates to the external site can be made as needed.

Merit Awards

Certificates of merit are available for awarding to EFWs in recognition of faithful service. Certificates will be awarded in five-year multiples, e.g., 5, 10, 15, 20 years. When the EFW retires from serving the state, the exact number of years of service should be placed on the award. If an EFW passes, the certificate can be awarded to the spouse or close relative. It is suggested that this certificate be awarded with a document-type frame.

Certificate procedure:

1. Forestry staff will submit names and years of service to the area dispatcher.
2. Certificates are prepared by the dispatcher and will be electronically signed by the Forestry Division Administrator (Chief State Forester) and the Forest Protection Bureau Director.
3. Certificates will then be returned to the Forestry staff for presentation.
4. Consider utilizing this opportunity to enhance fire prevention message during the spring, and presenting award with accompanying newspaper story.