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NEWS RELEASE

June 26, 2013

Mesa County, Colo.— The Mesa County Sheriff and Bureau of Land Management are implementing county-wide fire restrictions effective at 12:01 a.m., on Thursday, June 27, 2013. All Mesa County Fire Departments are supporting the fire restrictions.

"Unfortunately for much of Colorado, 2013 has been a very active fire year as a number of counties are dealing with devastating wildland fires," Grand Junction Fire Chief Ken Watkins said. "We're fortunate in Mesa County to have seen a slower start to the fire season but know that won't last long. Good coordination between the local fire departments, county, state and federal agencies in implementing fire restrictions and response to fires keeps the community and our firefighters safe when it does."

The restrictions allow fires in government-designated fire pits only, but restrict any open flames and fires in non-approved fire pits. Fire restrictions are implemented based on moisture content of the vegetation, weather predictions and fuel content in our county.

"It's important we implement these restrictions together in an effort to eliminate any confusion about the current fire danger," Sheriff Stan Hilkey said. "Our hope is that everyone complies with the restrictions to reduce the chance of wildfires and unnecessary risks to our firefighters."

The BLM Grand Junction and Colorado River Valley field offices will both enter fire restrictions June 27 on all the lands they administer. The higher elevation National Forest System lands in Mesa County will not implement fire restrictions at this time, conditions on these lands will continue to be monitored; however, visitors are still urged to be cautious with fire. For more information about fire restrictions on federal lands in the Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit, log on to:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2gjc/fireinfo_restrictions/index.html. Or to get information on fire restrictions statewide, visit www.coemergency.com/p/fire-bans-danger.html.

Causing a fire in woods or prairie during fire restrictions is a class 6 felony and can be punishable by fines of \$1,000-\$100,000 and/or imprisonment for 12-18 months. Other possible charges include fourth degree arson and intentionally setting wildfire.

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Mesa County Fire Chiefs Association



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INFO SHEET

June 26, 2013

Prohibited Activities:

- Open burning of any kind.
- Personal use of fireworks.
- On Public Lands, building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire except within a developed recreation site, or improved site. 36 CFR 261.52(a).
- On Public Lands smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. 36 CFR 261.52(d).
- On Public Lands operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark-arresting device properly installed, maintained, and in effective working order meeting either the USDA Forest Service Standard 5100-1a (as amended), or appropriate Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) recommended practice J335(b) and J350(a) (36 CFR 261.52(j)).

Allowable Activities:

- Fires within liquid-fueled or gas-fueled stoves, fireplaces within buildings, charcoal grill fires within developed residential or commercial areas, and fires within wood burning stoves.
- Professional fireworks displays permitted according to section 12-28-103 of the C.R.S.
- Fire suppression or fire department training fires.
- Tiki torches, small recreational fires at developed picnic or campground sites contained in permanent fire pits or fire grates with flame lengths not in excess of four feet and which are supervised by a responsible person at least 21 years of age.



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