



Press Release

Date: May 21, 2025
To: All Media
Subject: Wasco County Burn Ban

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The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Wasco County Board of County Commissioners, and county fire districts are issuing a debris burn ban that will go into effect beginning at 12:01 A.M. on Monday, June 2nd. The timing of this debris burn ban coincides with ODF's Central Oregon District declaring fire season, which will also occur at 12:01 A.M. on Monday, June 2nd. The purpose of the debris burn ban is to ensure the safety of Wasco County residents and is an effort to prevent human caused wildfires from occurring as we go into the 2025 summer fire season.

Conditions are drier than normal for this time of year and wildfire safety is of the utmost importance to fire managers across Wasco County. Human activities are the number one cause of wildfire starts in Oregon and this burn ban aims to reduce that statistic. We urge all residents to abide by these restrictions and educate those who may be unaware of their importance. The Wasco County Sheriff's Office will enforce violations of the debris burn ban under ORS 478.960 (1) and ORS 478.990 (1) and (2) as a misdemeanor crime. Burning of certain materials are permitted only with permission of local fire chief. ODF may also issue citations under ORS 477 for violations of burn regulations. Further, if suppression action is required by fire districts, the landowner may be responsible for paying the suppression costs.

This debris burn ban restricts the use of fire to dispose of backyard woody material through general property clean up, or from slash created from forestry work, and includes slash piles and burn barrels. The ban differs from other restrictions administered through ODF's Regulated Use Closure (like public use restrictions), which typically goes into effect in early July. Until Regulated Use Closure goes into effect, activities such as small campfires are still allowed.

During this time, we encourage residents to check piles they burned through the spring to ensure there is no residual heat that could rekindle as conditions heat up and dry out. In addition, residents are encouraged to use alternative methods for disposing of yard debris such as composting or chipping. We thank everyone for acting in the prevention of wildfire ignitions

and keeping our communities safe. For additional information on ODF's Central Oregon District, including Wildfire Restrictions & Closures, contact information, and unit offices, please visit www.ODFcentraloregon.com.

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