

CONTACT:

Walt Stowe

PIO/Community Relations Deputy

Garfield County Sheriff's Office

106 County Road 333-A

Rifle, CO 81650

Phone: 970-665-0207

Email: wstowe@garcosheriff.com



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Sheriff Lou Vallario
Garfield County, Colorado

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 14, 2020

Time: 9:20 AM

Title: Stage 1 Fire Restrictions Set In Garfield County

IMPORTANT: Please direct any media requests to the contact above. Do not contact the Garfield County Emergency Communications Center or Patrol staff for media requests.

GARFIELD COUNTY, CO. –

Beginning April 15, 2020, at 12:00 AM, the Garfield County Sheriff's Office along with the Bureau of Land Management-Colorado River Valley Field Office, the US Forest Service and the seven Fire Districts in Garfield County (Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District, Glenwood Springs Fire Department, Colorado River Fire Rescue, Grand Valley Fire Protection District, Gypsum Fire Protection District, De Beque Fire Protection District and Lower Valley Fire Protection District) will enact Stage 1 fire restrictions.

For the purpose of clarifying these restrictions the following definitions are offered.

By definition:

A "**Developed Area**" is an area, whether within city limits or rural, that is groomed, manicured and or watered, where grasses, brush and trees are regularly attended to by land owner. This includes residential and business areas, improved recreational areas, parks and other common areas.

An "**Undeveloped Area**" are lands that are not groomed, manicured, or watered, where grasses, brush and trees have been allowed to grow in a natural environment. This includes green belts that are not landscaped or manicured, open space lands, non-manicured park lands, and other areas where the fire hazard presented by the vegetation is determined by the authority having jurisdiction or designee to be an undue wildland fire hazard.

- All burn permits are postponed/Canceled until further notice with the issuance of Stage 1 Burn Restrictions.
- Campfires are only allowed within designated fire grates in **Developed Areas** (i.e. a permanent in-ground containment structure or store bought fire pit) A temporary fire pans and rock campfire rings will not be acceptable.
- no fires of any type including charcoal in **Undeveloped Areas**.
- no smoking except within a designated area, enclosed vehicle or building, a developed area or in an area free of combustibles
- no use of explosive materials, including “exploding” targets or bullets and tracer rounds
- Exercise common sense and industry safety practice when welding or operation of an acetylene or other similar torch with open flame always cleared safe area of vegetation and combustibles.

We are all aware of the extra burden that has been placed on our First Responders due to the COVID-19 outbreak in our country and our communities. There are simply not enough firefighter/EMTs available for COVID-19 response and non-essential burning responses.

This is not only due to the limited number of firefighters but with the COVID-19 requirements there are spacing requirements for firefighter and crew safety.

It is also important to maintain our air quality as pristine as possible for those who may be sick or already having breathing issues and added respiratory concerns during these trying times.

We need to work together to reduce and minimize any additional strain on our First Responders; including firefighters, EMT’s, Law Enforcement, Doctors, Nurses as well as the people, friends and neighbors in our communities.

Additional information will be released as it becomes available.

The mission of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office is to provide solutions for the people through professional, ethical and compassionate conduct.

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