



West Virginia Division of Forestry
www.wvforestry.com
Joe Manchin III, Governor
Randy Dye, Director/State Forester

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**“RAIN HAD NO EFFECT WHATSOEVER”
Eastern Panhandle Fire Danger Shows No Sign of Improvement**

Charleston, W. Va. – Assistant State Forester Ben Webster said that rainfall in the Eastern Panhandle last week did nothing to alleviate the area’s extreme forest fire danger.

“The rain that fell last week in the Eastern Panhandle had no effect whatsoever,” Webster said. “The area is so dry and the potential for forest fires is so high, that without a steady pattern of rain, I don’t see an end to the burning ban anytime in the near future.”

Officials at the Division of Forestry asked Gov. Joe Manchin to issue a ban on all outdoor burning in early September for the eight counties of West Virginia’s Eastern Panhandle: Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan and Pendleton. The ban will be in effect until the governor rescinds the order.

Of the 47 fires that have been reported in West Virginia since July 1, 25 have occurred in the Eastern Panhandle. Those 25 fires account for 86 of the 168 acres that have burned.

The ban includes fires built for camping, the burning of debris or for warming purposes; however, the following items are excluded from the restrictions:

- Fires for the purpose of chemical production, where fire is essential to operation.
- Fires for commercial land-clearing, such as mining, highway construction, and development: *Provided* that a permit is obtained from the Division of Forestry prior to burning.

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Regional Offices
Farmington 304.825.6983
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- Training fires conducted under the direct control and supervision of qualified instructors at a training facility operated by a fire department or government entity: *Provided* that a permit for such training fires is obtained from the Division of Forestry prior to burning.
- Fires for outdoor cooking conducted for fundraising events and charitable organizations: *Provided* that a water source capable of extinguishing the fire must be present and a permit is obtained from the Division of Forestry prior to the operation.
- Liquid-fueled gas grills, lanterns or liquid-fueled gas fire stoves.

For more information about forest fire prevention, visit the Division of Forestry's website at www.wvforestry.com.

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