



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

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Leslie Fitzwater, Public Information Specialist, 304.957.9342,
Leslie.C.Fitzwater@wv.gov

Contact: Ben Webster, Assistant State Forester, 304.558.2788,
Ben.C.Webster@wv.gov

Safety Tips for Burning Debris

Charleston, W.Va. – Winter storms downed numerous trees throughout West Virginia, and as the weather warms landowners will want to clear that debris from their property. In most cases, they will choose to burn it. If these debris fires are not properly attended they can easily escape and catch the woods on fire.

Officials at the West Virginia Division of Forestry offer the following tips to prevent a debris fire from escaping:

- Keep debris piles small
- Don't light more piles than you can safely control
- Never burn on windy days
- Have a water hose or bucket of water within reach
- Keep a shovel or rake nearby
- Stay on-site until the fire is completely extinguished
- Call 911 immediately if a fire does escape

If a fire does escape and causes a forest fire, the person who set it is liable for the costs of fighting the fire and must pay for any damages to other people's property. This also may result in a misdemeanor charge and a fine of up to \$300.

West Virginia's Spring Forest Fire Season began on March 1 and continues through May 31. During this time, outdoor burning is legal only after 4 p.m. All fires must be extinguished by 7 a.m. Outdoor burning is prohibited from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m.

As of March 18, 2010, 20 debris fires have escaped and resulted in forest fires.

To learn more about the state's fire laws, visit the Division of Forestry's Web site at www.wvforestry.com.

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Regional Offices
Farmington (304) 825-6983
Beckley (304) 256-6775
Milton (304) 743-6186