

# Stay informed, stay out of the way

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With so many fires burning throughout the region this early in the season, fire managers are pleading with the public to use common sense - and to exercise caution so that people aren't making things harder on firefighters and other Valley residents.

And with so much summer still ahead and fire fighting resources already stretched too thin, it's also important to keep improving fire safety on private properties, and, to connect with neighbors to assist or gain assistance in times of emergency.

Getting the best and most updated information can be critically important as well. Stay tuned for announcements about upcoming community fire meetings. Website links will be made available to enable people to watch these community fire meetings online.

Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Wild Rivers District Ranger Matthew Paciorek wants the public to

respect road closures. "Please watch out for smoke and fire traffic on the road and please respect the closure around the fire to help keep firefighters safe," he said. Some of these roads are narrow and dangerous in the best of times, so now, with smoke impairing visibility and oversized vehicles which might need to move quickly, the public needs to stand down.

And while people often want to get a closer look at wildfires, the use of drones is illegal. Wildfires are a "No Drone Zone." Fire managers say: "If you fly, we can't. Every time a drone is spotted near the fire all aircraft are grounded until we can be sure the drone is clear of this area."

Last year in Prescott, Arizona, 54-year-old Gene Alan Carpenter was arrested for flying a drone into the airspace near the Goodwin Fire. He was accused of endangering 14 aircraft and ground personnel with a "substantial risk of imminent death or physical injury" after flying his drone in the area. All firefighting aircraft had to be grounded for about an hour on

that fire, causing unfortunate fire growth.

The wildfire situation is serious enough without additional human error making things worse. Seventy percent of wildfires in Oregon are started by people; so it's imperative right now to not take any unnecessary risks with equipment use at home, camp fires in the forest, fireworks, tossing cigarette butts, or even poor decisions while driving. Fire managers also say good citizens should confront or help educate others who are endangering the community.

Making good decisions is also about getting timely and reliable information, and this can be a challenge with so many active fires. A good strategy may include using multiple news sources to get your daily updates. Below is a comprehensive list of resources available to the public for information and assistance.

**SEE INFO ON A-10**

# TREE ...

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When Dan Dover, representative from Main & Main, land developer and new owner of the lot was asked about why the tree had to be taken down he said, "It was a shame the tree had to come down and we did look at the plans to see if there was a way we could keep it, but there was no way to do it. The site is very tight -it looks like a big lot; it is just dirt right now, but it is a pretty big building. The tree would have affected the ability of movement for the trucks making deliveries to the store and interfered with parking."

Dover also mentioned that he was glad the chamber found a new Christmas tree site and that Main & Main would be happy and willing to support the community.

According to a June 6 article in the *Illinois Valley News*, Kayla Kasha, vice president of marketing for Grocery Outlet said, "We partner with community food banks and the local chapter of the chamber as well as support other community organizations in the effort to maintain a 'hyper-local focus' on business."

On the bright side of the

Christmas tree dilemma, Angela Graves, coordinator for the I.V. Chamber of Commerce announced that the chamber already has a new location and tree for the Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony slated for Nov. 23. Jeff Stiles from Oregon Caves Chevron has donated the location in his parking lot. The two trees that hover above where the Rosie's Inferno Pizza truck parks will be the new location of the Christmas tree lighting. "We will light the two trees together to make one big tree," said Graves. "I would like to start a fundraising committee for some new lights since when they bulldozed the Christmas tree, the lights went with it and were destroyed."

Graves also wanted to let the community know that there will be a holiday committee open to the public starting Saturday, Aug. 4, at 2 p.m. at Wild River Brewery & Pizza. The committee will discuss and plan for the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony that will include the tree lighting, Santa Clause, cookies, caroling and a kid's zone. "We will definitely be doing the caroling like we did last year and I am looking for a new caroling leader." Graves will also be planning for a small business Saturday event Nov. 24 to encourage the community to shop local for the holidays.

# ROUNDUP ...

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"This is a free contract between the property owner and Public Works and is renewed annually by Public Works who will send a property owner a form to be filled out, signed and returned to them," stated Ebert.

Suspending the vegetation management services of the

county is not without its trade-offs. Although the land adjacent to your property will no longer be sprayed with Roundup, maintenance of the plant growth there will be on the owner's dime from that time up until the waiver expires. This statement given by the JoCo Public Works defines the obligations of those county residents who choose to file the agreement:

"A property owner can submit an application... to have

Josephine County Public Works restrict herbicide use on the road right of way fronting their property. However, property owners must sign a written agreement which requires them to maintain the road shoulder, drainage ditches, and sight clearance areas free of vegetation at all times. The owner also assumes responsibility for any injuries to persons or property damage while working in the county right of way. When

a property owner fails to control the vegetation, Josephine County Public Works will resume its regular maintenance operations.

Once a property owner submits an application and it is approved, Public Works will provide 'Owner Maintains Roadside Vegetation' signs for property owners to initially install. Thereafter, the owner is responsible for maintenance and replacement, if necessary."

Any county residents who seek to restrict herbicide use on the land adjacent to their property and are capable of assuming the responsibilities outlined above, and who have not already done so, are encouraged to file for the "Request not to apply herbicides for vegetation and agreement to maintain roadside vegetation" contract. Josephine County Public Works can be contacted at 541-474-5460.

# IVFD ...

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"Not to be a laughing matter, but it just seems odd that soon after this - my fire - the bar that I usually like to go to which is the Duck... that burned down," Jordan said.

According to studies performed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), a global safety consulting and certification company,

house fires today are far more dangerous than in the past. They concluded "larger homes, plus open house geometries, plus increased fuel loads, plus new construction materials, equals faster fire propagation, shorter time to flashover, rapid changes in fire dynamics, shorter escape times and shorter structural collapse times."

Flashover - the rapid spreading of fire due to intense heat - occurs eight times faster in modern homes than it did 50 years ago. The results of the studies were published in the

New Science Fire Safety Journal and can be found at [www.newscience.ul.com](http://www.newscience.ul.com).

Coupled with climate change and the sweltering summer sun and you've got a real recipe for disaster.

"Have working smoke detectors in your home ... working carbon monoxide detectors," Hoke replied when asked about preventative measures. "Unattended cooking is a big cause of fires. Smoking in bed is a big cause of fires.

"The three leading causes of fire in this country are men, women and children, and

statistically it's true," Hoke added. "These house fires are 90 percent of the time human caused, as with the fire on Beebe; as with the fire down on Mesa Verde."

A few other tips to always keep in mind are Stop, Drop and Roll, as well as Get Out, Stay Out and Call 9-1-1. A very helpful list of fire safety tips can be found at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). On the home page, navigate to "Get Help" in the upper right-hand corner, click "Types of Emergencies" and then click "Fire."



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