



Pueblo County Sheriff's Office

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News Release

For Immediate Release
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Pueblo County Residents Urged to be Aware of Fire Danger

Pueblo, CO: With an abnormally dry winter upon us and an abundance of fire fuels available in dried trees, grasses and shrubs, Pueblo County residents are urged to be aware of the high fire danger that exists in the area.

“Conditions in this area are unusually dry and as this pattern continues, we know the fire danger will persist,” said Pueblo County Sheriff Kirk M. Taylor. “With the additional fuels that are available this time of year, coupled with the dry, warm and windy weather we’ve been having, I want to urge residents to be alert and cautious of the fire danger. We’ve already had a couple of small fires in different areas of the county this winter, which is an indication that conditions are very dry everywhere.”

According to the January 13 drought monitor from the National Weather Service, Pueblo County is in severe drought. The temperature outlook for the rest of January, February and March forecasts above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation, according to the National Weather Service.

So far this winter, there has been 4.1 inches of snowfall in the Pueblo area, well below the normal of 13.2 inches. Last year, there was 15.7 inches of snowfall at this time. Although some snow is in the forecast for the next week, the amount projected is minimal and is not expected to change the current fire danger.

Taylor reminds residents to be cautious, particularly with doing controlled burns, having open flames such as barbecue grills and home fire pits, working with tools and equipment that can spark or produce heat and with extinguishing cigarettes or other smoking materials. If you do conduct a controlled burn or have an open flame, make sure to have a fire extinguisher or water nearby if needed and extinguish the fire completely when done.

Check weather conditions and regulations before conducting a burn. Residents outside the Pueblo City limits who plan to do a controlled burn are asked to notify authorities before conducting the burn. When controlled burns are reported, the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office Communication Center can determine whether smoke or flames in a specific area is a reported burn prior to dispatching fire teams. Residents can report a controlled burn by calling the Pueblo



County Burn Line at (719) 583-BURN (2876) or online at www.pueblosheriff.com and click on the controlled burn notification link.

When Red Flag Warnings are issued, individuals should refrain from all burning. A Red Flag Warning means that a combination of strong winds, low humidity and warm temperatures can contribute to extreme fire behavior and no burning is allowed, including controlled burns.

Residents, especially those in rural areas, are also encouraged to do mitigation and create a defensible space around their property by clearing weeds, brush or other natural vegetation away from their structures. Removing brush, including dried leaves, grass and pine needles, can decrease the fire damage to a structure and allows for space for firefighting operations.

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