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Fire Danger Moved to **LOW** in Missoula Area

October 14, 2020 -- Missoula, Montana – Extended cooler weather and precipitation has prompted Missoula County fire protection agencies to reduce the fire danger in the Missoula area to Low, effective immediately. When fire danger is low, fuels do not ignite readily from small embers but will if a more intense heat source—such as lightning—occurs. Fires in open, dry grasslands may burn freely a few hours after rain, but wood fires spread slowly by creeping or smoldering. Forecasted weather calls for below to normal precipitation and below normal temperatures for the next six to 10 days. A new system arriving Saturday could bring some precipitation with it. Whatever Mother Nature delivers in the coming days, for now remember that although fire danger is *Low*, there is still a danger from fire. A warming fire left to smolder after morning coffee could creep its way to a nearby grassy field where a wind brings it to life! Even if there is frost on the ground at the time, *always* put that fire dead out by drowning, stirring it, drowning it again and leaving it *only* when it is cold to the touch!

Also remember that it is still not the right time to burn your backyard pile of leaves! The only burning currently allowed in Missoula County is essential agriculture and prescribed wildland—and that is by permit only. **General Burning Season (burning of yard debris/untreated vegetative waste generated onsite) is closed until March 1, 2021.** Within Missoula City limits, parcels must be at least one acre or more in size to be eligible for an outdoor burn permit and recreational fires are banned year-round, with exceptions for barbecues. Inside the Missoula Air Stagnation Zone, it is illegal to burn piles of leaves and grass year-round. Visit **MissoulaCounty.us** or **MCFPA.org** for more information on outdoor burning seasons, permits, and current restrictions.

Thank you and enjoy our great outdoors safely, visit BeOutdoorSafe.org!

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