



**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

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**State Fire Marshal's Office Urges Residents to Exercise Caution When Doing Yardwork**

**Olympia** – As part of Wildfire Awareness Month, the State Fire Marshal's Office urges residents to use extra caution when doing yard work.

In 2020, there were more than 1,500 wildfires reported. According to the Northwest Coordination Center (NWCC), nearly 95% of those fires were started due to human factors. To help prevent wildfires, residents should take extra precautions when doing any yard work or brush clearing:

- Maintain power equipment to prevent sparks from mowers, weed trimmers, or power saws from igniting dry grass.
- Check with your local authorities for any burn restrictions before starting an outdoor fire.
- If burning is allowed in your area, avoid burning on windy, dry days. Embers from open burning can ignite dry grass or nearby structures.
- Never use gasoline or other flammable liquids to start a fire.
- Keep burn piles at least 50 feet from any flammable materials, including fencing, structures, or lumber piles.
- Never burn plastics, construction debris, treated lumber, tires, pesticides, paint, or aerosol containers. These items contain toxins that can be harmful to people, animals, and the environment when burned.
- Supervise children around any fire, especially outdoor fires. Keep a 3-foot "kid-free" zone around all fires.
- Keep yard debris fires small, manageable, and easy to control.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington States firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

- Never leave a fire unattended even for a short period of time.
- Ensure the fire is completely extinguished when done. Douse with water, stir with a shovel, and then douse with more water.

For more information, contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at (360) 596-3929.

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