

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POINTER

MAY 2022

COMMON CAUSES OF IDAHO WILDFIRES

Humans are the number one cause of wildfires in Idaho. Because of this, organizations such as Idaho Firewise are raising awareness in an effort to reduce the number of wildfires throughout the State. There is plenty that can be done to reduce human caused wildfires; one of which is simply becoming aware of their causes. Idaho Firewise has a list of the common causes of Idaho wildfires referenced below. For more information, visit their website here: Idahofirewise.org



Arson

Arson is a felony act in which a person intentionally and wrongfully burns property. Arson is best prevented by prosecution. Remember, if you see something, say something. Report unusual behavior and be prepared to identify individuals and vehicles if you suspect arson may be involved in starting a fire.

Debris Burning

Around 1 in 5 human caused wildfires are produced by the improper burning of debris. Those who burn debris should follow proper [safety guidelines](#). Obtain a burn permit if necessary, obey fire restrictions, know what is ok and not ok to burn, make a fire break, avoid burning on hot, dry, and windy days.

Campfires

Campfires can turn into wildfires when they are not kept within a fire ring, when they are left unattended, and when high fire danger is posted. Make sure to obey campfire restrictions and to keep campfires confined to an established fire ring in a safe area at least 15ft away from anything that can catch fire.

Firearms

Target shooting is a common pastime in Idaho. Those who participate should do so responsibly. A few guidelines include not shooting on hot, dry and/or windy days; avoid shooting in restricted areas; refrain from shooting tracer or incendiary ammo; and have some water, a shovel, or a fire extinguisher ready to extinguish a fire startup.

Cars, Trucks, & Trailers

Mechanical and electrical malfunctions while driving, parking a hot vehicle over vegetation, dragging trailer chains, and rims sparking from a flat tire can start wildfires. To reduce the likelihood of starting a wildfire, vehicles and trailers should receive regular maintenance, and they should not be parked over vegetation.

Fireworks

In the United States, fireworks cause more than 32,000 fires and destroy more than 3,000 structures and vehicles annually (idahofirewise.org, 2022). Always follow local firework rules and regulations and practice proper firework safety: only allow for adult use, never throw fireworks, only light fireworks outdoors, etc.

Crop Residue

In the State of Idaho, an Idaho Burn Permit is required before one can open burn crop residue. If proper burn guidelines are not followed, even a controlled burn can get out of hand quickly. Only burn on designated burn days regulated by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) and follow proper [safety guidelines](#).

Smoking

Wildfires can start when smoking materials are not disposed of properly (throwing lit cigarette butts out of a car window, into a trashcan, or into vegetation). When finished smoking, make sure smoking materials are no longer lit or hot before disposing of them, and be mindful of where materials are being disposed of.



Ada County Emergency Management & Community Resilience

Address: 7200 Barrister Drive, Boise, ID. 83704

Phone: (208) 577-4750 E-mail: gstone@adacounty.id.gov

FAX: (208) 577-4759 Website: www.adaprepares.id.gov

