

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest

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Eldorado National Forest Fire Restrictions Begin August 4

Placerville CA ...Special fire restrictions will be implemented in the Eldorado National Forest beginning August 4. Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Ramiro Villalvazo issued a forest order that restricts campfires and charcoal barbecues to designated recreation sites and prohibits other fire related activities until the end of fire season. The fire restrictions affect the entire Eldorado National Forest including wilderness areas.

“A drying trend has increased the fire danger to the point where special fire restrictions are necessary,” said Villalvazo. “We passed a point this month where large wildfires are possible.”

The restrictions also prohibit operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a proper spark arrestor, smoking outside specific locations, and welding.

The following acts are prohibited within the Eldorado National Forest beginning on August 4 until a long-term change in weather patterns occurs and the restrictions are removed:

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, or stove fire, except within the stoves and fire rings provided in the designated recreation sites shown on Exhibit A. *A complete list of these recreation sites can be obtained on the Eldorado National Forest web site at www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado/.*
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter, that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
3. Welding, or operating acetylene or other torch with an open flame.
4. Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting device properly installed and maintained in working order.

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The following persons are exempt from this order:

1. Persons with a permit from the Forest Service specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act or omission.
2. Persons with a special use permit from the Forest Service for a recreation residence in a Recreation Residence Tract, may build, maintain, attend or use an elevated charcoal or propane grill for purposes of cooking at their recreation residence, provided that they have a valid Campfire Permit, and comply with the terms of the permit.

The prohibitions carry penalties that can include fines and imprisonment. Violation of the prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. Forest Service fire prevention personnel will patrol the Forest daily looking for unsafe situations.

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