

## City of Flagstaff Fire Restrictions and Closures Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **Q: What stage are we in currently and how will I know when it changes?**

**A:** Click [HERE](#) To view current Fire Restrictions and Closures. During our summer wildfire season, the homepage on the City of Flagstaff website ([www.flagstaff.az.gov/](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/)) will list the current stage and corresponding *City of Flagstaff Fire Restrictions and Closures* in effect. Signs indicating restricted activities will be posted in visible locations at each corresponding park/trail dependent upon the current stage. Links to additional wildfire and forest management information are available on the Flagstaff Fire Department's Wildland Fire Management website ([www.flagstaff.az.gov/wildlandfire](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/wildlandfire)).

The Flagstaff Fire Department is the designated department to coordinate Restrictions and Closures with local area partnering wildfire agencies. Attempts are made to maintain consistency across jurisdictions although some actions undertaken by our partners may vary. **It's your responsibility to "Know Before You Go!"**

For information on fire restriction and closures on the Coconino National Forest surrounding Flagstaff you can call (928) 527-3600 or visit the online "Alerts and Notices" page at: [www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/coconino/alerts-notice](http://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/coconino/alerts-notice)

Fire Restrictions and Closure information throughout Arizona is available at [www.firerestrictions.us/az](http://www.firerestrictions.us/az).

### **Q: Why are Fire Restrictions and Closures implemented?**

**A:** Simply put, Fire Restrictions are implemented to protect the City of Flagstaff and its residents. Wildfire is the #1 threat to Flagstaff. We experience 60-100 wildfires per year within city boundaries, and another 150+ on jurisdictions immediately surrounding our community. Ponderosa pine forests are extremely well adapted to, and dependent upon, frequent low-intensity wildfires, but they are extremely vulnerable to high intensity fire events. Societal demands and resulting management practices during the past century have created a forest that is now severely overcrowded. Unnatural fuel accumulations, exacerbated by insect, disease, and drought, have resulted in an alarming increase in both the size and severity of wildfires. These fires endanger not only the trees themselves, but also other associated resource values such as wildlife habitat, scenic quality and watershed function. In addition to serious ecosystem damage, a single large-scale fire within or near the city will most-assuredly affect lives and properties, inflicting serious, and long-term, economic harm. Fire restrictions and closures are implemented to protect the community during times of high potential of ignition and large fire growth.

### **Q: How will fire restrictions affect me?**

**A:** Fire restrictions and closures may cause slight inconveniences to Flagstaff residents and visitors, but the alternative could be a large destructive wildfire causing significant and long term physical, economic and environmental harm to Flagstaff and the area. Dependent upon the

current stage, Flagstaff residents and visitors may be prohibited from: smoking in parks, along trails or on disc golf courses; from the use of certain BBQ grills at various parks or at home; or from having campfires in authorized campgrounds (campfires are always prohibited within City limits except at authorized private campgrounds). When extreme fire danger exists and Stage 4 Restrictions are implemented, full or partial area closures may be enacted which could prohibit entrance to and use of city parks and trails.

**Q: How long will Fire Restrictions last?**

**A:** Fire Restrictions and Closures last as long as a significant wildfire risk persists. The Flagstaff Fire Department coordinates the lifting of Fire Restrictions and Closures our area partnering wildfire agencies. Many variables are taken into consideration when considering the rescission of restrictions. They are typically lifted by mid-July after monsoon rains have produced precipitation over a large portion of the area to significantly reduce the potential for ignition and large fire growth.

**Q: What if I get caught in violation?**

**A:** Don't do it. An individual caught in violation of Fire Restrictions and Closure orders will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Penalties which may include fines, criminal and/or civil prosecution, jail time dependent upon the offense. In addition, should an individual's actions result in a fire, regardless of whether they are intentional or accidental, restitution for the full cost of all suppression activities and damages to developed and/or ecological values may be sought in court along with costs associate with civil suites. These costs are significant. As an example, the cost for suppression of the two week long Schultz Fire in 2010 amounted to approximately \$15 Million with the full cost of damages amounting to nearly \$150 million. The repercussions of violating Fire Restrictions are severe.

**Q: Why is smoking only banned at Thorpe Park, McPhearson Park, Buffalo Park, and McMillan Mesa Park in Stage 1?**

**A:** These parks and the FUTS trail systems are connected to large tracts of forest that have a larger potential for wildfire spread or elevated social impact. A fire in these areas places our community at a greater risk of potential damage or loss.

**Q: What do I do if I see a fire?**

**A: Call 911.**

- Provide your name and phone number in case we need to call you back.
- Provide your location as specifically as possible. Refer to Forest Road numbers, estimated mileage from main road intersections and/or geographic landmarks. Example: "I'm on Forest Road 171 about a mile south of the junction with Forest Road 245."
- Describe what you observe, and if any people and vehicles are in the area.
- Don't put yourself at risk. You've done your civic duty by reporting the fire. Leave the fire-fighting to the professionals and move a safe distance away.

Here are some additional tips on how to report a fire on the National Forest (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/coconino/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=stelprdb5339077>):

**Q: What do I do if I see someone in violation?**

**A:** If you see a fire or other emergency **Call 911** immediately. Do not confront any person suspected of a violation. Report the violation to the Flagstaff Police Department at (928) 774-1414. Be prepared to provide details on the location, suspected violation and a description of the suspected individual.