



JOINT NEWS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | May 26, 2023

North Dakotans can help prevent wildfires, keep beaches clean during Memorial Day weekend

BISMARCK, N.D. – As families prepare to enjoy North Dakota’s outdoor destinations over the Memorial Day weekend, residents and visitors are encouraged to recreate responsibly by practicing fire safety and prevention. While recent moisture has provided some relief from fire starts over the past few weeks, dry conditions persist in some areas of the state.

To view current fire restrictions by county, travelers can visit ndresponse.gov or contact their local emergency management office. Burn ban restrictions for state parks are derived from the county in which the park is located. Some burn bans also are determined by the fire danger rating and/or red flag warnings for a particular area. The fire danger rating is issued daily and can be found at ndresponse.gov.

Campers should always “know before you go,” and are encouraged to verify if campfires are permitted at the destination they are visiting. The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department has increased communication to visitors in weekly emails outlining current fire restrictions. Those with state park camping reservations are encouraged to watch their inbox prior to their visit. In all North Dakota state parks, fires must be contained in designated fire rings. Remember to practice these safety tips:

- Keep your fire small, and never leave a campfire unattended.
- Be sure that pets and children are supervised near any campfire.
- It is important to keep a shovel and bucket of water nearby to properly extinguish the fire.
- If possible, allow the wood to burn completely to ash when you are finished enjoying your fire.
- Pour water over all embers—not just the red ones—until the hissing sound stops.
- Then, stir with a shovel. Continue pouring water and stirring with a shovel until the fire is completely extinguished.
- Use the back of your hand to feel the heat of the fire embers.

Remember, if it’s too hot to touch, it’s too hot to leave.

“North Dakotans look forward each year to Memorial Day weekend, to spend time with family and friends. We encourage everyone to practice fire safety to protect the natural resources we all enjoy,” said State Forester Tom Claeys.

To learn more about recreating responsibly and to help prevent wildfires in the state, North Dakotans can visit SmokeyBear.com and read through the [Campfire Safety Guide](#). Remember, only YOU can prevent wildfires!

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) would like to remind citizens to please “Keep Your Beaches Clean.” “Keep Your Beaches Clean” is an ongoing public awareness campaign that was first introduced by the State Water Commission in 2013 to educate North Dakotans about laws on sovereign lands.

Sovereign lands are publicly owned lands that include the beds and islands lying within the ordinary high watermarks of navigable lakes and streams.

These efforts are meant to help reduce littering and glass container violations on public beaches and sandbars throughout the state, particularly along the Missouri River. Signs are posted at numerous access points along the Missouri River to make the public aware of possible consequences for these violations, including a \$100 fine for glass containers, a \$250 fine for littering and a \$100 fine for illegal motorized vehicle use.

“As people get out to enjoy North Dakota’s lakes and rivers over the course of the summer months, we ask that everyone does their part to help keep our beaches clean,” said DWR Director, Andrea Travnicek. “Water resources are often a central part of outdoor recreational experiences in North Dakota, so taking care of them is a high priority.”

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