

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator
FROM: Phil Cecere, Building Official Fire Marshal
DATE: July 22, 2024
SUBJECT: Review the July 17 change in fire danger level and burn restrictions, changing from a high to very high level.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The Jefferson County Fire Marshal requests the Board of County Commissioners review a recent change in the fire danger level from moderate to high.

ANALYSIS:

As a requirement of newly adopted JCC 8.72.040(1), the Fire Marshal shall report any change in fire danger level to the Board following any change in fire danger level and corresponding burn restrictions. The Fire Marshal has reviewed the order from the Washington State Public Lands Commissioner for a statewide escalation of fire danger on public lands. In recognition of the order and after consultation with the Jefferson County Fire Chief's Association, the decision was made to increase the fire danger level to very high.

Attached are the very high fire danger letter press release and Jefferson County burn level graphics with restrictions.

FISCAL IMPACT:

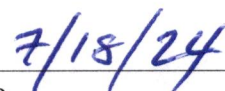
There are no direct fiscal impacts associated with this ordinance although efficiency would be improved.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board review the current changes and increase public awareness through discussion in a public meeting.

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator


Date



Jefferson County Community Development Office of the Fire Marshal

Phil Cecere

621 Sheridan St • Port Townsend WA 98368

Desk: 360.379.4450 Web: <https://co.jefferson.wa.us/1687>

For immediate release July 17, 2024

The Jefferson County Fire Marshal and the Jefferson County Fire Chiefs are tasked with instilling safeguards against hazards to life and safety from dangerous conditions associated with fire, protecting residents, firefighters, emergency responders, community assets, and property.

Due to current atmospheric and field conditions an escalation of the fire danger risk level is necessary. The fire danger risk level of VERY HIGH is now in effect. In coordination, County Fire Chiefs and the County Fire Marshal agree that conditions warrant this declaration. Several factors are at play in this decision, including but not limited to input received from DNR, ORCCA, NWS, and other state, federal, and local agencies.

During an observance of VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD all restrictions from lower levels are in effect in addition to:

- Outdoor burning and outdoor open flame devices are prohibited without a permit, unless listed in subsection (ii) below, or approved in writing by the fire marshal. JCC 8.72.040 (5)(d)(i)
- Permits are NOT required for use of commercially made listed and labeled propane or pellet feed barbeque devices used at a residence or stoves or fireplaces used WITHIN a residence. JCC 8.72.040 (5)(d)(ii).

This fire danger risk level and restrictions are in effect until atmospheric and field conditions fall to an acceptable level for a length of time to determine that the threat has lessened and that risk to residents, property, and emergency responders has subsided to acceptable levels.

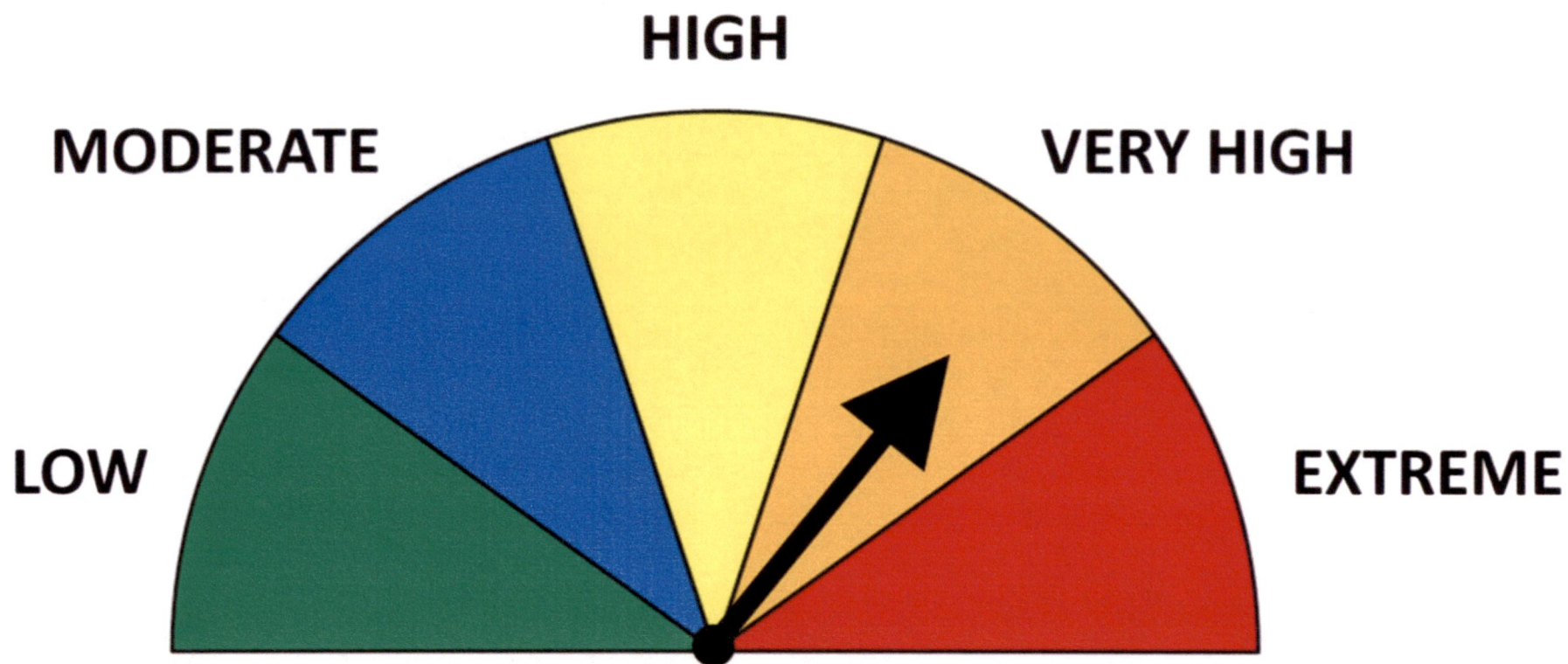
In summary, only propane and pellet fed barbeque devices are allowed under this risk level and all other outdoor burning activities and devices are not allowed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phil Cecere".

Phil Cecere, Jefferson County Fire Marshal

Mission Statement

To preserve and enhance the quality of life in Jefferson County by promoting a vibrant economy, sound communities and a healthy environment.



Fire Danger: Very High



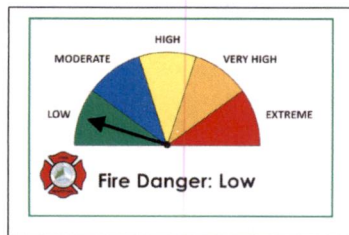
Jefferson County Community Development Office of the Fire Marshal

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www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1687 | 360.379.4450

Jefferson County Fire Danger levels and Restrictions

Low Green

Low fire risk, No restrictions.



When the fire danger is "low" it means that fuels do not ignite easily from small embers, but a more intense heat source, such as lightning may start fires in duff or dry rotten wood. Fires in open, dry grasslands may burn easily a few hours after a rain, but most wood fires will spread slowly, creeping or smoldering. Control of fires is generally easy.

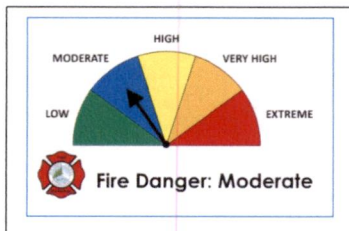
Allowed devices/ activities: No restrictions, all lawful activities allowed

Please note that ONLY recreational fires are allowed in Urban Growth Areas

Urban growth area means land, generally including and associated with an incorporated city, designated by a county for urban growth under RCW [36.70A.030](#)

Moderate Blue

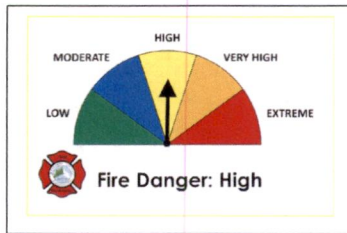
July 1 County Wide Restriction of all Residential Burning and Land Clearing burning fires or as otherwise directed based on atmospheric and field conditions. No other restrictions.



When the fire danger is "moderate" it means that fires can start from most accidental causes, but the number of fire starts is usually pretty low. If a fire does start in an open, dry grassland, it will burn and spread quickly on windy days. Most wood fires will spread slowly to moderately. Average fire intensity will be moderate except in heavy concentrations of fuel, which may burn hot. Fires are still not likely to become serious and are often easy to control.

Prohibited devices/ activities: Burn barrels, land clearing or yard debris burning, sky lanterns

High Yellow

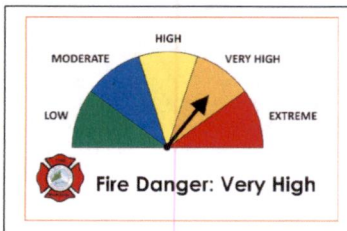


When the fire danger is "high", fires can start easily from most causes and small fuels (such as grasses and needles) will ignite readily. Unattended campfires and brush fires are likely to escape. Fires will spread easily, with some areas of high-intensity burning on slopes or concentrated fuels. Fires can become serious and difficult to control unless they are put out while they are still small.

No person shall operate or use any device liable to start or cause fire in or upon a "high" fire hazard. Restricted Open Flame Devices. No Wood, Charcoal Cooking Fires (BBQ). Tiki Torches. Liquid Fuel Candles or Lanterns. Gas or Propane Fired Weed Burners. Discharge of Fireworks of Any Type. Discharge of Fire Arms (Open Lands) - Undeveloped Lands of Jefferson County. Only Gas or Propane Fueled Appliances. ONLY Wood or Solid Fueled Cooking Fire - Enclosed Flame Only. (Example: – Pellet Fed or Propane Barbeque Grills, Smokers.)

Prohibited devices/ activities: Fireworks, charcoal grills, exploding targets, incendiary ammunition, firearm discharge on unimproved county lands, tiki style torches, no open flame devices

Very High Orange

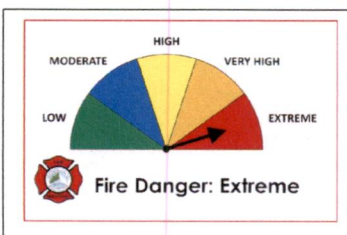


When the fire danger is "very high", fires will start easily from most causes. The fires will spread rapidly and have a quick increase in intensity, right after ignition. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity, such as long-distance spotting and fire whirls. These fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires.

No person shall build, ignite, or maintain any outdoor fire of any kind or character, or for any purpose whatsoever, in a Very High fire hazard area. No Outdoor Burning or Discharge of Fire arms. ONLY Gas or Propane Fueled Appliances.

Prohibited devices/ activities: UL listed residential propane or wood pellet fueled barbeque devices only. No open flame devices.

Extreme Red



No Outdoor Fire, Burning, or Discharge of Any kind or Type.

When the fire danger is "extreme", fires of all types start quickly and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious and can spread very quickly with intense burning. Small fires become big fires much faster than at the "very high" level. Spot fires are probable, with long-distance spotting likely. These fires are very difficult to fight and may become very dangerous and often last for several days.

Allowed devices/ activities: No allowed devices at this level FULL BAN on any fire or burning related activity

Open burning, residential burning or land clearing burning will be prohibited during any period of impaired air quality as designated by ORCAA or the Department of Ecology or during times of high fire danger

Questions about devices or activities not listed please contact the Fire Marshal's Office or your local Fire District