



North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts



Steve Leighton, Fire Chief

MEDIA RELEASE

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North Tahoe Fire and Meeks Bay Fire Protection Districts Prohibit ALL Open Burning and Recreational Fires

Tahoe City, Calif. May 27, 2021 – On Monday, May 10, 2021 the CALFIRE AEU Unit suspended burn permits for the season, and on Monday, May 24, 2021 CAL FIRE NEU followed suit, resulting in full suspension of residential burn permits in the Tahoe Basin. These are the triggers that prompt North Tahoe Fire Protection District (NTFPD), Meeks Bay Fire Protection District (MBFPD), and Alpine Springs CWD jurisdictions to activate local fire restrictions by suspending all solid fuel recreational fires and open burning. The suspension takes effect Monday and will remain in effect through the remainder of fire season.

Following the adoption of the 2019 Fire Code, ONLY Natural Gas (NG) or Propane (LPG) outdoor firepits and barbecues, and pellet grills/smokers are allowed year-round except during **Red Flag**/critical fire weather conditions. All of these appliances must be utilized following manufacturer's recommendations. Open-flame devices such as tiki torches and all fireworks, including sparklers and firecrackers, are illegal in California year-round. For reports of hazardous/illegal camp fires, people should call 9-1-1, and illegal firework activity should be reported to local law enforcement.

"Timber vegetation already at summer dryness levels, and above normal fire activity is projected in the Sierra and Tahoe regions this summer and likely into the fall." said NTFPD Fire Chief Steve Leighton. "We saw the devastation that fires created in California in recent fire years, and we ask our residents and visitors to follow our fire restrictions to protect this precious area that is under severe drought."

All sources of open flames, including Natural Gas (NG) or Propane (LPG) outdoor firepits and barbecues, and pellet grills/smokers are prohibited during **Red Flag**/critical fire weather conditions. Red Flag Watches and Warnings of critical fire weather in the Tahoe Basin are issued by the [National Weather Service, Reno](#). "The National Weather Service will issue a Fire Weather Watch roughly 3-5 days in advance of critical fire weather conditions, including strong winds and low humidity," said Chris Smallcomb, NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist/PIO. "Once confidence levels are high enough, this is upgraded to a Red Flag Warning, usually 1-3 days in advance. Our fire service partners use the alerts to help guide staffing and resource decisions not just locally but over regional and multi-state areas."

NTFPD and MBFPD are asking residents to prepare for wildfire by maintaining a minimum of 100 feet of Defensible Space around every structure. "It's essential for residents to effectively maintain defensible space to improve their home's chance of survivability from both surface fires and ember showers." Said NTFPD Fire Marshal Steve McNamara. "Please sign up for free defensible space inspections, and free residential curbside chipping."

Here are some tips to help prepare homes and property for wildfire:

- Maintain at least 5 feet free of combustible material around each structure.
- For a distance of at least 30 feet from the home, keep the area Lean, Clean and Green.
- Clear all dead and or dying vegetation 100 feet from all structures.
- Landscape with [fire resistant/drought tolerant plants](#).
- Find alternative ways to dispose of landscape debris through chipping or green waste collection opportunities.

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For additional information on how to create Defensible Space, tips to prevent wildfires and ways to prepare for emergencies and evacuations, visit www.TahoeLivingWithFire.com.

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