

The Forest Stewards Guild
2019 Galisteo Street, Suite N7
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-983-8992
<https://foreststewardsguild.org/>

News Release

Media Contact: Eytan Krasilovsky
eytan@forestguild.org or 505-983-8992 ext. 707

Wildfire Preparedness is Year-Round:

Give Firefighters a Break! Stop Fires Before they Start!

Albuquerque, NM – September 3, 2021– Although much of New Mexico is currently experiencing monsoon conditions, other areas of the nation are continuing to battle historic wildfires. While maintaining wildfire response readiness in New Mexico, fire resources that are available to be shared have been supporting the national effort. The National Wildland Fire Preparedness Level remains at 5 (PL5). At the highest rating, ongoing and additional wildfires have the potential to exhaust national wildland firefighting resources. These large and complex fires need continued resources for suppression efforts and some fires may last until winter snow falls.

Now is not the time to let our guard down in New Mexico. Despite the recent rain, conditions can change quickly in warm and dry weather that is typical of September and with the long-term effects of drought. Continuing our “wildfire preparedness is year-round” campaign, our message for September is *Give firefighters a break! Stop fires before they start!* No matter your outdoor activity or whether you are just traveling, you can prevent wildfires caused by vehicles by taking some simple actions.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Is your vehicle and trailer road-ready? Conduct a pre-trip inspection and ensure all necessary maintenance has been completed.
 - Check tire lugnuts to ensure proper torque or tires can come off.
 - Grease trailer wheel bearings or they may overheat.
 - Improperly inflated tires or those in degraded condition may fail, causing the rim to drag and spark.
 - Don't overload your trailer's weight ratings, axles can bend and cause tire failure or the axle itself to fail.
 - Ensure trailer chains are not dragging on the ground.
 - Brakes worn too thin may cause metal to metal contact, which can cause a spark. Trailer brakes can also seize up and overheat.
- Never park or drive over dry grass or brush.
- Utility Vehicles (UTVs) and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) can start wildfires. Be sure to clean out any vegetation accumulated underneath and conduct regular maintenance. Also carry a fire extinguisher.
- In your vehicle, carry a fire extinguisher (ABC 10 lb. or larger), a shovel and extra water. These tools can make the difference by stopping a fire before it becomes a wildfire.
- Extinguish all smoking materials and dispose of ashes and butts in trash receptacles for that purpose.
- If a fire starts, report it to 9-1-1 immediately.

The [Forest Stewards Guild](#) and [Fire Adapted NM](#), are working with the [Cibola](#), [Carson](#) and [Santa Fe](#) National Forests, [New Mexico Forestry Division](#), the [National Park Service](#) and [Bureau of Land Management New Mexico State Office](#) to build a 2021 wildfire preparedness calendar and share the

message across multiple platforms, including social media, webinars and community events. Bookmark the [wildfire preparedness webpage](#) to follow the campaign throughout the year.

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