

Fire Watch Services

Why is a fire watch required on each operation during fire season? The purpose of the fire watch is to stay after the day's work is over and report any fire starts to the proper authorities. The fire watch is required on duty after the last power-driven equipment used by the operator has been shut down for the day. The fire watch must be on duty a minimum of one hour. During periods of high fire danger, DNR recommends the fire watch be on the operation site longer than the mandated one hour.



Logging shovel

A fire watch must:

- visually observe all parts of the operation on which industrial activity has been in progress.
- be physically capable of fighting a fire and have experience in operating fire-fighting equipment.
- possess on-site communications (CB radio, cellular or radio phone) to summon extra help if a fire breaks out. Transportation is also required if radio or phone communication doesn't work.
- be able to report a fire to the responsible protection agency within 15 minutes of detection.

Definitions

On **Precaution Level III days**, tractor, skidder, feller/buncher, forwarder, or shovel logging operations may be allowed between 8 p.m. and 1 p.m. if tractors, skidders or other equipment with a blade capable of constructing fire-lines are immediately available to quickly reach and effectively attack a fire start.

FIRE WATCH means at least one competent person be present at the site(s) for one hour following the operation of spark-emitting equipment. The fire watch shall be vigilant and positioned to be able to detect any fires within five minutes which may originate at the site(s) of the equipment operation. The fire watch shall report a fire to the responsible protection agency within 15 minutes of detection.

HOOTOWL means an operation is allowed **ONLY** between 8 p.m. and 1 p.m.

OTHER OPERATIONS means any steam, internal combustion, electric engines or any other devices which emit sparks on any forest land or any other place where, in the opinion of the department, fire could be communicated to forest land.

What You Need to Know

WHEN USING SPARK-EMITTING EQUIPMENT ON FORESTLAND



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

MAY 2013

Industrial Fire Precaution Levels (IFPL)

How does it work?

By law, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) uses two closure systems to reduce wildfire risk on 12.7 million acres of private and state forestland protected by the agency.

Activated when needed during the summer fire season, one closure system applies to woods workers and other industrial forest users. The other set of protections is aimed at the general public, but also includes local residents, landowners, recreationists and forest workers.

Wood workers are required to observe both sets of restrictions as fire danger dictates. Other land users only need to follow the public use restrictions.

How do I find the IFPL in my area?

To find the Industrial Fire Precaution Level in effect for your area, call the Department of Natural Resources at **(800) 323-BURN** or visit our website at **www.dnr.wa.gov**.

Industrial Precautions

Level I

Fire equipment and fire watch service is required.

Level II

Limits certain activities to between 8 p.m. and 1 p.m.

Level III

Prohibits some activities and limits others to between 8 p.m. and 1 p.m.

Level IV

All operations are prohibited.

DNR, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs all use the same four-level industrial regulation system. This system, which helps prevent wildfires by regulating work in the woods, is known as the Industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) system.

Operation: Power saws

Precaution Level	Landing	Tractor/Skidder	Other Woods Saws
I. Closed Season	Fire Watch	Fire Watch	Fire Watch
II. Partial Hootowl	Fire Watch	Hootowl	Hootowl
III. Partial Shutdown	Hootowl	Hootowl	Prohibited
IV. General Shutdown	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited

Operation: Yarding

Precaution Level	Tractor/Skidder	Cable ¹ (gravity systems)	Cable (other systems)
I. Closed Season	Fire Watch	Fire Watch	Fire Watch
II. Partial Hootowl	Fire Watch	Hootowl	Hootowl
III. Partial Shutdown	Hootowl	Hootowl	Prohibited
IV. General Shutdown	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited

¹Includes approved motorized carriages

Other Operations

Precaution Level	Loading	Blasting	Welding
I. Closed Season	Fire Watch	Fire Watch	Fire Watch
II. Partial Hootowl	Fire Watch	Hootowl	Hootowl
III. Partial Shutdown	Hootowl	Hootowl	Hootowl
IV. General Shutdown	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited

People who need this information in an alternate format may call **(360) 902-1300** or TTY **(360) 902-1125** or TRS **711**

Public Use Restrictions

DNR administers Public Use Restrictions, which limit activities on forestland during periods of high fire danger.

Summer Fire Rules: From April 15 to October 15, or later if the fire danger warrants it, the following restrictions are activated:

- Cigarette smoking** on forestland is only allowed on roads, cleared landings, gravel pits, or similar cleared areas.
- Fireworks** may not be lit on forestland.
- Chain saw** use in non-industrial work must follow IFPL requirements.



Burn Ban: During burn bans initiated by DNR, all open fires are prohibited. Burn bans initiated by DNR cover all lands that DNR protects from wildfire, but may include other lands protected by local fire departments or by federal agencies. Before you burn, contact DNR at (800) 323-BURN or your local fire protection agency.



▲ Feller buncher & pickup



▲ Shovel yarder truck



▲ Spark emitting equipment



▲ Wheeled skidder ▼ Road Grading



Can I continue to work during an IFPL shutdown?

Operators who wish to continue an activity that is prohibited under an industrial fire precaution level must obtain a written waiver from DNR. The operator must also obtain the landowner's permission to seek a waiver. DNR will not issue a waiver against the wishes of the landowner.

The operation must also be in compliance with all of Washington's fire protection laws and with general "fire-safe" practices.

A fire-safe operation is one where the chance of a fire has been reduced, or where a plan is made for early discovery and suppression, if a fire ignites.

Examples of fire prevention measures include:

- wetting or removing slash fuel in the immediate operating area
- night operations, and
- ceasing activities when the relative humidity is less than 35 percent or during windy conditions

Increased fire detection and suppression measures may include:

- pre-strung hose to the yarding or cutting area
- a fire watch
- a roving patrol during the waiver period, as well as after working hours
- an additional water supply or fire-fighting tools

Each operation is unique and must be evaluated relative to conditions existing at that site. An activity in an alder stand on a north-facing slope would require few preventive or suppression measures to continue to operate during a shutdown. However, the same activity in a conifer stand on a south-facing slope would require more stringent prevention and increased suppression steps.

A primary consideration of a fire-safe operation is fire prevention or reduction of ignition sources. Increased fire detection and suppression capabilities will be secondary, but important concerns. In this case, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Waivers are most often granted to continue road maintenance or operations in gravel pits. Waivers are seldom allowed for any purpose when Level IV industrial precautions are in effect.



Fire Safety Checklist for Spark-Emitting Equipment on Forestland

Equipment or location	WAC reference*	Approved exhaust system	5 gallon backpack pump	Fire extinguisher	Shovel	Pulaski	Water supply	Clear flammable debris
Landings	WAC 332-24-405(8)		✓ (two)			When required by DNR		
Trucks or vehicles used for hauling	WAC 332-24-405(7)	✓		✓	✓			
Passenger vehicles	WAC 332-24-405(3)	✓		✓				
Power saws	WAC 332-24-405(4)	✓		✓	✓			
Fixed position machines	WAC 332-24-405(1)	✓		✓	✓			✓ (10 feet)
Tractors and mobile machines	WAC 332-24-405(6)	✓		✓	✓			
Tail/corner haulback blocks	WAC 332-24-405(13)		✓		✓	✓		✓ (6 feet)
Cable yarding over 1,200 feet	WAC 332-24-405(9)						✓	
Motorcycles/ATVs	WAC 332-24-405(5)	✓						
Other spark-emitting engines	WAC 332-24-405(5)	✓		✓				

* WAC (Washington Administrative Code)