



## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

200 W. Oak Street  
Post Office Box 1190  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80522-1190  
(970) 498-7010  
Fax (970) 498-7006  
E-mail: [bocc@larimer.org](mailto:bocc@larimer.org)

### NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Deni La Rue, Community Information Manager, (970) 498-7150, [dlarue@larimer.org](mailto:dlarue@larimer.org)  
Sgt. Kevin Johnston – Larimer County Sheriff's Emergency Services Coordinator,  
(970) 498-5300, [johnstka@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:johnstka@co.larimer.co.us)  
Neil Gluckman, Assistant County Manager, 498-7007, [ngluckman@larimer.org](mailto:ngluckman@larimer.org)

DATE: July 29, 2008

SUBJECT: Larimer County Adopts Fire Restrictions

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Larimer County, Colorado – The Board of Larimer County Commissioners today adopted fire restrictions beginning at noon today through Tuesday, September 2, 2008. The restrictions are based on a recommendation from Larimer County Sheriff Jim Alderden. Hot and dry conditions have increased the concern for dangerous wildfires in Larimer County.

Today's restrictions: prohibit open fires; the use of fireworks; and public firework displays in the unincorporated areas of Larimer County. **Contained open fires are not restricted at this time. Because 'contained open fires' are okay, this is not a ban, but restrictions.**

**Also okay - Citizens who live in unincorporated areas of Larimer County can operate a charcoal grill on a non-combustible surface at their private residence. Normally this use would fall into the 'open fires' restriction.** Today the Board also imposed a prohibition on the sale of fireworks within the unincorporated area of Larimer County concurrent with today's restrictions.

Any person who knowingly violates the restrictions commits a class 2 petty offense and can be fined. The County's complete 'fire ordinance' is available at: <http://www.larimer.org/policies/>.

**Today's restrictions mean that no open fires are allowed, no open camp or cooking fires, however campers can use camp stoves and grills using gas or pressurized liquid. People can also use permanently constructed, stationary, metal or masonry fireplaces such as those permanent fireplaces located in campgrounds. Smoking in the open is not allowed under these restrictions.** In another decision today, the Board of County Commissioners decided to ban the sale of fireworks in Larimer County. According to state statutes, the Board can do this in conjunction with fire restrictions and when extreme fire danger exists. The Larimer County Sheriff's Office as well as the Commissioners believes this condition to be present.

The Board also authorized Sheriff Alderden to approve exemptions. Open fires include the burning of irrigation ditches except for those located within and completely surrounded by irrigated farmlands where such burning is necessary for crop survival and specific written approval has been granted in advance by the Larimer County Sheriff.

Definitions of Open Fires, Fireworks and Contained Open Fires follows.

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DEFINITIONS:

1. **Open fires shall mean:** any open burning, including camp and cooking fires; or welding, or operating an acetylene or other torch with open flame. **Open fires shall not include:**
  - a. Fires in camp stoves or grills, fueled by bottled gas or pressurized liquid, and specifically designed for cooking or heating purposes.
  - b. Fires in permanently constructed stationary masonry or metal fireplaces specifically designed for the purpose of combustion.
  - c. Fires in commercially operated wood and/or charcoal fired grills designed for cooking.
  - d. Smoking within an enclosed vehicle or smoking within an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material. Smoking within an enclosed vehicle shall mean that the cigarette, cigar or other smoking instrument is at all times contained within the vehicle and is not allowed to leave the vehicle or protrude or be held outside the vehicle, including the window of the vehicle. Butts and stubs must be disposed of within a trash receptacle or within the vehicle.
2. **Contained open fires shall mean:** fires in permanently constructed stationary masonry or metal fireplaces specifically designed for the purpose of combustion; or operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark arresting devise properly installed, maintained and in effective working order meeting either Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Standard 5100-1a or appropriate Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) recommended practice J335(b) and J350(a). Contained open fires shall not include fireplaces or wood stoves located inside permanent structures.
3. **Fireworks shall mean:** any article, device, or substance prepared for the primary purpose of producing a visual or auditory sensation by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation which meets the description of fireworks as set forth in the United States Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations, Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 173.88 and 173.100. **Fireworks do not include:**
  - a. Toy caps which do not contain more than twenty-five hundredths of a grain of explosive compound per cap;
  - b. Highway flares, railroad fuses, ship distress signals, smoke candles, and other emergency signal devices;
  - c. Educational rockets and toy propellant device type engines used in such rockets when such rockets are of nonmetallic construction and utilize replaceable engines or model cartridges containing less than two ounces of propellant and when such engines or model cartridges are designed to be ignited by electrical means;
  - d. Fireworks which are used in testing or research by a licensed explosives laboratory.
4. **Public fireworks displays shall mean:** - any display of fireworks conducted by a qualified pyrotechnic operator in compliance with article 78, section 7802 - fireworks - of the uniform fire code, as amended, and conducted only after the approval by the local fire authority, and compliance with any conditions imposed by the local fire authority. #####