



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

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Media Release

To: All media outlets
From: Jennifer L. McFarland
Public Information Officer
Date: 13 April 2006
RE: Burning season

Burning season is here again, but before you start your slash piles ablaze, take a few precautionary measures:

- ◆ **Find out if you need a permit to burn in your area.** Whether you live in an incorporated city or in the county, burn regulations might affect when and what you are able to burn.
- ◆ **Contact your local law enforcement agency prior to burning.** Many permits list this as a requirement, but sometimes people forget to make the call. The Latah County Sheriff's Office and Whitcom are responsible for dispatching and coordinating fire/ambulance and law enforcement response in Moscow and Latah County. Knowing that a burn is planned at your address will help prevent us from sending crews to your house for no reason.
- ◆ **Contact your neighbors prior to burning.** Although there is no legal requirement to notify neighbors that you're burning yard waste, it is common courtesy. Many people have smoke allergies and would appreciate a few hours to assemble things and make plans to stay away during the time you will be burning.
- ◆ **BE PREPARED!** So many of the structure or land fires that the Sheriff's Office and our local fire departments investigate started as controlled or planned burns that whipped out of control due to high winds and lack of planning. Avoid burning when winds are forecasted. Make sure you keep your fire contained and that you have plenty of water or other retardant necessary to extinguish your blaze. You should also have shovels and/or pick-axes accessible should you need to dig a fire containment line. As such, having extra hands available during the day you burn is also advisable. Lastly, do not leave your fire unattended even for a short period of time.

Even with good precautionary practices, some fires burn beyond your control. If this happens, be prepared to call 9-1-1 and give explicit and detailed directions to your property. We hope that this burning season goes well and that we see a reduced number of fires that require emergency response. Thank you.