



State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTS & LANDS

172 Pembroke Road Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Phone: 603-271-2214 Fax: 603-271-6488
TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964
nhdfl.dncr.nh.gov



To: Forest Fire Wardens, Deputy Wardens, Special Deputy Wardens, Fire Departments
From: Steven Sherman, Chief, NH Forest Protection Bureau
Date: September 21, 2025
Subject: State Prohibition on Kindling Open Fires and Smoking in and near woodlands

On Monday, September 22, 2025, the Governor's Proclamation prohibiting open fires and smoking in and near woodlands will take effect. This was done because of the fire conditions we have and will continue to have well into Fall. The drought conditions are severe across the state and wildfire indices are at the point where mop-up operations are extensive and the potential for large fire activity exists.

What prohibitions are contained in the Proclamation?

...it shall be unlawful for any person in the State to

- Kindle any open fire, including fires built for camping, the burning of debris, or warming, but **the following shall be excluded from these restrictions:**
 - Training fires conducted under the direct control and supervision of qualified instructors at a training facility operated by a fire department or government entity; *Provided*, that a permit for such training fires is obtained from the Division of Forests and Lands prior to burning.
 - **Category I "campfires" contained within fire resistive rings at public or private campgrounds that have permanent staff on site; *Provided*, that a permit for such Category I fires is obtained from the Division of Forests and Lands prior to burning.**
 - Liquid fueled gas grills, lanterns or liquid-fueled gas fire stoves.
- smoking a pipe, cigar and/or cigarette outdoors in or near woodlands, or on public trails.

What this means is:

- **Category I fires are prohibited everywhere, except in a campground which has been inspected, meets the campground campfire specifications, and has a seasonal fire permit**
- **Category 2, 3, and 4 fires are banned everywhere, public and private lands**
- **No smoking is allowed in or near woodlands or on public trails**

Also to note: The online fire permit system has been shut down until weather conditions improve.