



## PLAN AND PREPARE BEFORE YOU BURN THIS SPRING

The leading cause of human-caused wildfires in Montana is debris burning. Before you burn this spring make sure you plan and prepare! Wildfires caused from people burning in barrels, pits, slash piles, or agricultural burning is a common problem. In order to avoid costly fines and citations, make sure you know where and when burning is allowed. The steps you take before you strike make all the difference to prevent escaped fires.

**Make sure you have enough** people, water, and equipment/hand tools available to control the fire if it threatens to escape.

**Contact your local fire department** in advance to confirm that burning is allowed and to find out whether a permit is required to burn. The Department of Environmental Quality may also impose further burning restrictions due to air quality. Failure to call beforehand may result in an unnecessary response from your local fire department.

**Check the weather forecast.** Do not burn on hot windy days! Weather fluctuations, such as sudden gusts of wind, could make debris burning spark a wildfire.

**Choose a safe burning site** far away from power lines, overhanging limbs, buildings, automobiles, and equipment. Have a vertical clearance at least three times the height of the pile, as heat from the fire extends far past the actual flames that you see. And a horizontal clearance twice the height of the debris pile. When burning fields, ditch banks or fence lines, it is always safest to ignite against the wind.

**Remain with your fire** until the fire is out and if the wind does pick-ups, put your fire out. Most fires escape because they are left unattended and/or winds increase in speed or change direction. To ensure the fire has been completely extinguished, drown the fire with water, turn over the ashes with a shovel and drown it again. Repeat several times. Check the burn area regularly over the next several days and up to several weeks following the burn, especially if the weather is warm, dry, and windy.

For more information visit [www.keepgreen.org](http://www.keepgreen.org)



# LANDSCAPE DEBRIS BURNING

Proper Debris Burning Prevents Wildfire