

FOREST FIRE WARDEN & STATE FOREST RANGER

Your local Forest Fire Warden, Fire Department, and the State of New Hampshire Division of Forests & Lands, work collaboratively to reduce the risk and frequency of wildland fires in New Hampshire. To help us assist you, please contact your local Forest Fire Warden or Fire Department to determine if a permit is required before doing ANY outside burning. Under State law (RSA 227-L:17) a fire permit is required for all outside burning, unless the ground is completely covered with snow. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services also prohibits the open burning of household waste. Citizens are encouraged to contact the local fire department or DES at 603-271-1370 or www.des.state.nh.us for more information.

Due to a record warm winter and little snow, our first fire occurred on February 4th with several more early fires to follow. Normally a large percentage of the warm windy days with low humidity occur when the ground is saturated from a long snow covered winter. By the time the surface fuels and ground dry out enough to burn, we only have a few weeks until “green up”. This year however we had an extended period of these favorable spring fire conditions. Our largest fire in the state was 86 acres. The average size fire was .6 acres. Extensive summer rains kept total acreage burned to near normal levels

As has been the case over the last few years, state budget constraints have limited the staffing of our statewide system of 16 fire lookout towers to Class III or higher fire danger days. Despite the reduction in the number of days staffed, our fire lookouts are credited with keeping most fires small and saving several structures due to their quick and accurate spotting capabilities.

NH FIRE STATISTICS

<u>CAUSES OF FIRES REPORTED-2012</u>	<u>TOTAL FIRES</u>	<u>TOTAL ACRES</u>
	2012	318
	2011	125
	2010	360
	2009	334
	2008	455
Lightning	07	
Equipment	06	
Arson	14	
Campfire	14	
Children	15	
Smoking	17	
Railroad	00	
Misc*	140	(*Misc: power lines, fireworks, electric fences, etc.)

Locally, we had two brush fires this year one from an unpermitted burn and one from a permitted burn that got out of control. Burn permits are required any time of the year when there is not enough snow to keep the fire from spreading (usually considered 3”). A permitted fire can only be kindled between the hours of 5:00 pm and 9:00am unless it is actively raining. When an open burn can be kindled is controlled by the N.H. Department of Forest and lands but what can be burned is controlled by the Department of Environmental Services. The local wardens do not have a say in either, they only enforce the rules. If you have any questions or want a permit check the town web site or this Town Report for a list of names and numbers of issuing agents. There is no fee for a burn permit.

Frank Currier Plainfield Fire Warden