

Crystal Lakes Fire Protection District

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Policy & Criteria for Instating a Fire Ban

Having the statutory authority to issue fire restrictions, as provided by Colorado Revised Statute 32-1-1002, Crystal Lakes Fire Protection District hereby establishes the following policy for the imposition of fire bans.

The Fire Chief, or a member of the department designated by the Chief, will check the following resource tools on a regular basis – at least once per week year-round and at least every forty-eight hours during fire season. Information used in assessments is sourced from the USFS Wildland Fire Assessment System (WFAS) site, the Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center (for the Remote Access Weather Stations (RAWS) data), and other national and state fire agency resources.

Resource Tool	Monitor Closer	Fire Ban
1000-Hour Fuel Moisture	11-15%	below 10%
National Fire Danger Class	High	Very high
RAWS temp/rh*	>75°/<25%	>80°/<15%
Energy Release Component**	>64%	>68%
Live Fuel Moisture	<120%	<100%

If more than two of the indicators are in the “Monitor Closer” range, the Fire Chief, or a member of the department designated by the Chief, will begin checking these resources on a daily basis, if not already doing so.

The Fire Chief, or an officer designated by the chief, may instate a Fire Ban if **three** of the Resource Tools have reached or exceeded the threshold for Fire Ban, or if **two** of the resources have reached the threshold for Fire Ban and **two** are in the Monitor Closer range. Where possible, the Fire Chief or his/her designee will advise the Fire District Board in advance of placing a ban, and is required to do so within twenty-four hours of placing a ban.

The determination of whether to place a fire ban will also take into account the long-range forecast, observed local conditions, the Haines Index, the Forecast Fire Danger Class (produced by NFDRS), and the availability of local and county resources, as well as fire behavior and firefighting tactics. Additional information sources will be monitored using the following criteria:

Information Source	Warning Level	High Warning Level
Forecast Fire Danger Class	High	Very high
Haines Index	4	5+
Long-Range Forecast	Used to determine stability of situation	

* Data from the Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) specific to the Red Feather Lakes area is updated on the web several times each day during the fire season. Threshold numbers refer to the maximum temperature and minimum relative humidity recorded for the day.

** The Energy Release Component is a calculated output of the NFDRS which provides a composite fuel moisture index reflecting the contribution of all live and dead fuels to potential fire intensity. Data in this category will be judged to have met or exceeded the criteria if current or forecast numbers meet or exceed the criteria.

If Larimer County or State of Colorado Fire Bans are in place, those bans will by law apply to the Crystal Lakes Fire Protection District. The reverse is not necessarily true, as Crystal Lakes weather and fire conditions do not always coincide with conditions throughout Larimer County or even in nearby communities such as Red Feather Lakes or Glacier View Meadows. When Larimer County or State of Colorado fire bans are not in place, the actual conditions existing in Crystal Lakes will be used in the determination of whether to place or lift a Fire Ban.

If a Fire Ban is placed by the Fire Chief or his/her designee pursuant to the established matrix, it will have the backing of the Fire Protection District Board, even if it was not possible to advise the Board prior to placing the Ban.

If a Fire Ban is placed, it will remain in effect until the next regularly scheduled Fire District Board meeting, when current and forecast conditions will be evaluated to determine whether to extend or lift the Ban. A Ban may be lifted prior to the next scheduled meeting of the District Board if the following Resource Tools have moved, and remained, out of Fire Ban level for at least seventy-two hours: the National Fire Danger Class, the 1000-hour Fuel Moisture, and the Energy Release Component; and if forecast conditions and the long-term weather forecast predict a continuing trend of improving conditions. The input of the Fire Board will be sought on any proposed lifting of a Fire Ban.

Outdoor fires during a fire ban are deemed a hazard to public safety and will result in a fire department response and extinguishment of the fire. The Crystal Lakes Fire Protection District will determine if the fire is in violation of state, county, fire district or Crystal Lakes Road & Recreation Association policy, and send a written notice of any violations to the appropriate entity, which may impose fines or other punitive measures.