



MONTEZUMA COUNTY, COLORADO

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

May 3, 2010

Spring is a busy time; lots of cleanup to do, including prescribed burning. The wet winter means that the lakes and reservoirs are full. It also means that grasses and brush are already growing, which can lead to increased risk of fires quickly spreading and getting out of control. Our spring winds only make matters worse. So, it's time to talk about fire prevention, mitigation and awareness.

If you plan on burning this spring, take a few precautions. Have a ready source of water available in case the fire starts moving into areas you don't want burned. Make sure that your fire is attended at all times. Avoid burning on days when high winds are called for. Check the National Weather Service website for wind conditions, and plan accordingly. And take a few moments to call your fire district. They appreciate knowing about the burn.

If you see a smoke plume, take a moment to investigate, then call the Fire Department. Don't assume that everyone else has seen the smoke and made a report. As in most things, early intervention keeps fires from spreading.

You should make an assessment of your property, taking note of areas where fires could easily start, or where brush and undergrowth needs to be cleared. Right now it's easy to remove unwanted brush; later in the season when things have taken hold, removal will require much more work.

If you have questions about developing a fire mitigation plan, there are a couple of readily available resources; the Firewise Council of Southwest Colorado sponsors the Neighborhood Ambassador Program, and has lots of information for property owners. You may contact them at: montezumafirewise@gmail.com. Also check out the Southwest Colorado Fire Information Clearinghouse website: www.southwestcoloradofires.org . Or, contact the federal Lands Office here in Montezuma County at 970-565-7402.

Wildfire awareness helps make our community a safer place to live, work and play!

Be Prepared!

Doug