

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

County Fire Chief Sets August 15 Target for Lifting Ban on Open Burning

Sandoval County, NM, July 21, 2014—Recent rains and future weather forecasts have combined to prompt the Sandoval County Fire Chief to set August 15, 2014 as a target date for lifting the current ban on opening burning in the unincorporated areas of the county.

“We have received some rain recently, but we will dry out again once we get high temperatures, which are why we aren’t lifting the ban immediately,” Fire Chief James Maxon said. “We are using scientific measurements such as fuel moisture content to make our decision. We expect that data to show us that it’s safe to lift the ban by August 15. However, we will reserve the right to extend the ban if conditions change before that date.”

Under the current ban, cooking and heating devices that use Kerosene, white gas or propane as fuel may be used, as long as there is fire protection nearby and a defensible space around the device. Fires no larger than 2 feet by 2 feet in established fire rings also are permitted.

Once the ban is lifted, county residents wishing to conduct open burns still will need to get a permit from the Fire Department. Permits can be obtained by calling 505-867-0245. That same number can be used to report illegal burning.

A separate ban on fireworks in unincorporated parts of the county expired on July 9, 2014. But officials urge residents to remain careful with the use of any items that might spark a fire. “I strongly encourage everyone to be vigilant about fire prevention so a catastrophic fire does not occur,” Chief Maxon said.

Open burning restrictions are enforced by the Sandoval County Fire Marshal and the Sandoval County Sheriff's Office. Anyone found violating the open burn ban will be subject to arrest and penalties up to and including a \$300 fine and 90 days in jail.

For additional information, visit the [Sandoval County Fire Department website](#).

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