

ORDINANCE No. 2021-02

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR COCONINO COUNTY, ARIZONA, ESTABLISHING PROVISIONS FOR THE ENFORCEABILITY OF RESTRICTIONS UPON WILDFIRE-RISK ACTIVITIES IN ITS JURISDICTION; AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE SAME; AND REPEALING COCONINO COUNTY ORDINANCE No. 2017-05

I. TITLE

This Ordinance shall be known as the Coconino County Wildfire Defense Ordinance.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of The Coconino County Wildfire Defense Ordinance is to save lives; preserve and protect the public health, safety, welfare, comfort, and convenience of the citizens of, and visitors to, Coconino County; to preserve and protect private property and public infrastructure; to preserve the natural beauty of the Area of Jurisdiction; to coordinate wildfire restrictions in and amongst the various jurisdictions within Coconino County-pursuant to Section 11-251(63) of the Arizona Revised Statutes.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **“AREA OF JURISDICTION”** has the same meaning as provided for in Arizona Revised Statute § 11-801(2), namely that part of Coconino County outside the corporate limits of any municipality, federally owned land or any federally recognized tribe in accordance with 25 Code of Federal Regulations part 83.
2. **“BOARD”** means the Coconino County Board of Supervisors.
3. **“CAMPFIRE”** means an open outdoor fire, which is used only for the cooking of food or providing of human warmth or for recreational purposes.
4. **“COMBUSTION”** means a chemical process of oxidation that occurs at a rate fast enough to produce heat and usually light in the form of a glow or flames.
5. **“DIRECTOR”** means the appointed Director of the Coconino County Department of Emergency Management.
6. **“EXEMPTION”** means a limited set of exclusions from the prohibited activities set forth in Section IV below. Exemption is a defense to a charge of a violation of this Ordinance. In the event of an ambiguity or uncertainty as to the meaning or application of

an exemption, the narrowest interpretation as shall further the prevention of wildfire and promote the public health, safety and welfare shall prevail.

7. **“FIRE BAN”** means a prohibition upon open fires, campfires, fireworks, and combustion when so declared by the Board of Supervisors.
8. **“FIRE STAGE”** means a category of exemptions commensurate with the degree of least to most wildfire risk, and as further specified herein.
9. **“FIREWORKS”** means any combustible or explosive composition, substance or combination of substances, whether deployed on the ground or in the air or held in place by an individual or any device, whose purpose is a visible or audible effect brought about by combustion, explosion, detonation, or deflagration, and that is a consumer firework or display firework as further defined in Arizona Revised Statute § 36-1601.
10. **“FIRE DISTRICT”** is as described in Arizona Revised Statute 48 Chapter 5.
11. **“PERMISSIBLE FIREWORKS”** means the types of permissible consumer fireworks as defined in Arizona Revised Statutes § 36-1601.
12. **“OPEN FIRE”** means a combustion event or fire where the products of combustion are emitted directly into the ambient air without the interception of a regulated fire arresting and heat controlling device.
13. **“ZONE”** means a specific geographical area/zone that is outlined by using existing County district boundaries, fixed and unchanging natural landmarks, major roadways, municipal or community boundaries or other highly visible, easily mapped (illustrated) and communicated boundaries.

IV. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

It shall be unlawful, in the area of jurisdiction, for one or more individuals, a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, association, or other business or commercial entity to, either directly or indirectly:

- A. Initiate, facilitate, maintain, cause or contribute to a campfire, an outdoor open fire, or use of fireworks; or
- B. Knowingly engage in an activity likely to result in combustion outdoors;

during a FIRE BAN.

V. CLASSIFICATION

Any person, firm, association, partnership, corporation or other legal entity who is convicted of a violation of this Ordinance is guilty of a class (1) misdemeanor and shall be subject to a fine not to exceed \$2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment not to exceed six months.

A person who commits an act in violation of this chapter that results in an appropriate emergency response or investigation and who is convicted of the violation may be liable for

the expenses that are incurred incident to the emergency response and the investigation of the commission of the offense in accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes 13-1709; *Emergency response and investigation costs: civil liability*

Any peace officer in the State of Arizona may enforce the provisions of this Ordinance.

VI. FAILURE TO OBEY AND CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

Each calendar day within which a violation occurs or continues shall be deemed a separate offense. The failure to obey a lawful order by any peace officer of this State shall constitute a distinct and separate violation of this Ordinance.

VII. WRITTEN PERMIT OR VARIANCE

Individuals may seek a written permit to engage in activity prohibited by this Ordinance. Such permit must be issued by the specific fire district or fire authority in the district where the activity is to be performed, and must specifically describe the activity, location, and time at which the permit applies. For activities during a stage of restriction **outside** of a fire district or other jurisdictional fire authority, a variance request can be submitted to the Coconino County Emergency Management Director for the activity. If, upon review by the DIRECTOR, regional fire weather conditions favor the authorization of a variance, a variance may be issued specifically describing the activity, location, and time at which the variance applies.

Adequate fire suppression equipment and personnel, as indicated by the permit or variance, must be on site and readily available. Reasonable and prudent measures should be taken to mitigate fire risk such as the removal of receptive fuels from the immediate area of activity and monitoring of changing weather conditions to include high winds. In the event of changing weather conditions not favorable for safe activity and the prevention of fire, the activity shall be suspended.

A written permit or variance issued according to this Ordinance does not relieve the individual from any civil or criminal liability outside the authority of this Ordinance, associated with the activity and the potential for fire because of such activity.

VIII. FIRE STAGE EXEMPTIONS TO THE FIRE BAN

There are hereby established three stages of exemptions to prohibited activity. A fire stage exemption is a defense to a charge that a violation of the fire ban has occurred or is occurring. Each stage of exemption from Stage One to Stage Three describes a continuum of increasing fire restrictions by reducing the number of exemptions to the fire ban.

A. STAGE ONE

A Stage One exemption allows for combustion, open fire, and campfire only when used:

1. By persons with a written permit or variance.
2. For personal use of cigarette or other tobacco smoking medium when inside an enclosed vehicle or in a developed recreational site in an area that is free of combustible materials and vegetation.

3. For emergency repair of public utilities and railroads and other health and safety mitigation measures when operated by a public utility or railroad and implemented in accordance with an approved agency plan.
4. By any Federal, State or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting entity in the performance of an official duty.
5. By persons whose open fire is the result of a device manufactured for the purpose of cooking of food, fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels that can be turned on and turned off (for example a gas grill) when used in an area that is free of combustible materials and vegetation. This does not include Liquid fuel or LPG fire rings.
6. By persons operating internal combustion engines, mechanical or industrial operations, that would produce open flames and sparks but containing appropriate spark arresting devices; those welding or operating acetylene or other torch with open flame in an area that is free of combustible materials and vegetation; and those using explosives with written permission of an authorized governmental agency.
7. By persons operating generators or pumps with an approved spark arresting device in an area that is barren or cleared of all overhead and surrounding combustible materials within three (3) feet of the device.
8. With an open fire using charcoal or wood for cooking of food or for providing warmth for human beings in a for fee campground with fire hosting amenities, such as a grill or fire ring.

Unless allowed by an exception above, common prohibited activities include open fire, campfire, fireworks, open smoking, and use of explosive targets and tracer round ammunition.

B. STAGE TWO

A Stage Two exemption allows for combustion, open fire, and campfire only when used:

1. By persons with a written permit or variance.
2. For personal use of cigarette or other tobacco smoking medium when used inside an enclosed vehicle only.
3. For emergency repair of public utilities and railroads and other health and safety mitigation measures when operated by a public utility or railroad and implemented in accordance with an approved agency plan.
4. By any Federal, State or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting entity in the performance of an official duty.
5. By persons whose open fire is the result of a device manufactured for the purpose of cooking of food, fueled by liquid petroleum or LPG fuels that can be turned on

and turned off (for example a gas grill) when used in an area that is free of combustible materials and vegetation. This does not include Liquid fuel or LPG fire rings.

5. By persons operating internal combustion engines with spark arresting devices when the use is for common household-only activities such as landscaping and property maintenance and repair.
6. By persons operating generators or pumps with an approved spark arresting device in an area that is barren or cleared of all overhead and surrounding combustible materials within three (3) feet of the device.

Unless allowed by an exception above, in addition to Stage One common prohibited activities, prohibitions now include all open fire, campfires, open smoking, outdoor mechanical and industrial operations such as welding and use of acetylene, and operating motorized vehicles off designated trails and roads.

C. **STAGE THREE**

A Stage Three exemption allows for combustion, open fire, and campfire only when used:

1. By persons with a written permit or variance
2. For personal use of cigarette or other tobacco smoking medium when used inside an enclosed vehicle only.
3. For emergency repair of public utilities and railroads and other health and safety mitigation measures when operated by a public utility or railroad and implemented in accordance with an approved agency plan.
4. By any Federal, State or local officer or member of an organized rescue or firefighting entity in the performance of an official duty.

Unless allowed by an exception above, there are no outdoor activities that allow for open fire, campfire, fireworks, and combustion events.

D. **PERMISSIBLE CONSUMER FIREWORKS.**

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 36-1606, the State of Arizona has declared that the regulation of fireworks is a matter of statewide concern and, as a result thereof, if no federal or state agency stage one or higher fire restrictions are in place, permissible consumer fireworks may be used during the periods of June 24 through July 6 and December 24 through January 3 of each year.

If no federal or state agency stage one or higher fire restrictions are in place, the use of permissible consumer fireworks during the periods of June 24 through July 6 and December 10 through January 3 of each year is an affirmative defense to a charge that a violation of the fire ban has occurred or is occurring.

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 36-1606(A)(2), if a federal or state agency has implemented a stage one or higher fire restrictions, the use of permissible consumer fireworks is prohibited on all dates. Any use of permissible consumer fireworks during such time that both this Ordinance and federal or state agency stage one or higher fire restrictions are in place is a violation of this Ordinance.

IX. DETERMINATION OF CONDITIONS WARRANTING A FIRE BAN

The Director shall be responsible for determining when conditions are such that a fire ban is warranted. The Director shall base his determination upon such factors as may be deemed relevant by the Director including, but not limited to, the imposition of fire restrictions within the area of jurisdiction by federal, state and local agencies having the authority to impose such restrictions. Upon a determination that conditions warrant a fire ban the Director shall submit to the Board of Supervisors such report with data and exhibits specifying: (a) the basis for the determination that a fire ban is warranted; (b) a recommendation as to which fire stage is appropriate for the prevailing conditions; and (c) whether conditions warrant a declaration of emergency.

The Director, when offering the determination required under this Ordinance, will also determine whether any Zone within the area of jurisdiction may be exempted from application of this Ordinance. The Director shall specifically define the Zone(s) that is/are to be exempted. In formulating this determination, the Director will consult with necessary subject matter experts, effected population officials, law enforcement and any other party necessary to appropriately define any Zone(s) to be exempted from this Ordinance. The concurring opinions, opposing arguments and other relevant points will be included in the Director's recommendation for county leadership consideration.

The Director shall also ensure an effective public awareness effort to ensure compliance and to facilitate enforcement efforts are applied to an educated public. This campaign will include comprehensive mapping to better illustrate any Zone exemption(s).

There may be more than one Zone exemption enacted at any one time.

X. ENACTMENT OF FIRE BAN AND FIRE STAGE AND NOTICE

If, following the report of the Director, the Board of Supervisors by majority vote determines that a fire ban is warranted the Board may issue an Order enacting a fire ban. The Order shall specify the effective date of the fire ban, the fire stage that shall be enacted, any Zones that are exempted, and whether conditions warrant a declaration of emergency. Immediately upon enactment of a fire ban the Board of Supervisors shall cause public notification of the fire ban restriction.

XI. PROGRESSION FROM FIRE STAGE TO FIRE STAGE; ALTERATION OF ZONE EXEMPTIONS

During the period of any fire ban Order, the Director shall have authority to change the fire stage of exemptions commensurate with the risk of wildfire in the area of jurisdiction. The Director is also authorized to add, remove, or amend any Zone exemptions to the fire ban Order. Such changes to fire stages or Zone exemptions are subject to the following procedure:

Prior to making authorized changes, the Director shall conduct the same consultations as in the determination of fire ban. The Director shall prepare and submit a report with supporting exhibits as deemed necessary and consult with the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors, the County Manager, and the County Sheriff. Upon determination that the fire stage will be adjusted or a Zone exemption will be added, removed, or amended, the Director shall specify the effective date of the change and shall cause public notification of the fire ban restriction.

Nothing herein prevents the Board of Supervisors from convening a meeting and seeking a report from the Director and taking action in the event the Board believes a need exists for a fire stage or Zone exemption change.

XII. TERMINATION OF FIRE BAN

Unless otherwise specified in the Order enacting the fire ban, the Order shall expire on the date that the Director issues a written determination that conditions warranting the fire ban no longer exist; or alternatively, on the date that the written determination specifies as an expiration date if within thirty (30) days of the written determination. Thereafter, the Director may rescind his determination if wildfire conditions worsen such that the fire ban Order should remain in effect.

Nothing herein prevents the Board of Supervisors from convening a meeting and seeking a report from the Director and taking action in the event the Board believes a need exists for termination of the fire ban.

All determinations of the Director recommending a fire ban, altering the fire stages or Zone exemptions, or recommending termination shall be in writing and an original of the same shall be filed with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

XIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

Subject to the citizens' right of referendum, this Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption by the Board of Supervisors on the date given below and upon the filing of a copy of this Ordinance with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

XIV. REPEAL OF ORDINANCE 2015-03

Upon the effective date of this the Wildfire Defense Ordinance, the Coconino County Ordinance No. 2017-05 dated May 03, 2017, is hereby repealed.


SO ORDAINED by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors on January 5, 2021.

AYES: 5

NOS: 0

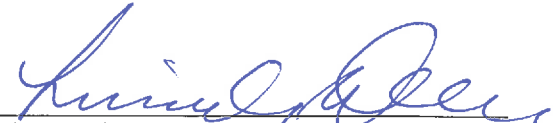
ABSENT: 0

COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By 
Elizabeth C. Archuleta, Chair



ATTEST:


Lindsay Daley, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Deputy County Attorney, Rose Winkeler