

DATE:	Tuesday, April 24, 2012
CONTACTS:	Rebecca Mouw, DNR forester ranger, (715) 466-4022, or Kevin Harter, DNR communications, (715) 635-4242
SUBJECT:	Despite recent rain, fire restrictions remain in effect

SPOONER, WI – Emergency Burning Restrictions are still in effect in the storm damage areas of northwest Wisconsin and will remain in place until vegetation greens and the long-term fire danger situation improves.

Spring is when the majority of forest fires occur. The vegetation is brown and trees are starting to grow new leaves and needles. At this time, they do not have much moisture and are more susceptible to burning. When the oaks leaf out completely it's a signal that spring fire season is ending and the green up is here.

“Weather conditions vary greatly in the spring,” said Rebecca Mouw, Minong forester ranger. “It can be cold and wet one day and the next day it can be sunny, 80 degrees with strong winds. There is just too much timber on the ground to risk the chance of any fire escaping and causing a wildfire.”

Emergency burning restrictions for northwest Wisconsin counties impacted by last summer's severe windstorm began April 6 in DNR fire protection areas. This includes portions of Burnett, Douglas, Polk and Washburn counties. Emergency burning restrictions apply to the designated areas that are outside incorporated cities and villages in these counties.

DNR fire control officials will continue to restrict the following activities:

- Combustible material in a burn pile or burn barrel
- Campfires with the exception of developed camping areas within a metal fire ring
- Smoking a cigar, cigarette, or pipe, except within an enclosed vehicle or building
- Outdoor disposal of ashes, charcoal briquettes, matches or any burning material
- All fireworks (restricted and non-restricted)

Outside the storm damage area, burning permits will be allowed – or suspended -- depending on the weather and fuel conditions that day. Regardless of the burn location, always obtain proper permits and check the daily restrictions by calling 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876), then enter the county code and listen to the entire message. When burning is permitted, make sure the fire is cold by drowning and stirring the pile.

The DNR also asks that if burns were conducted prior to the restrictions being in effect, to make certain they do not contain any hot embers. Strong winds cause many of these improperly extinguished fires to rekindle and cause a wildfire.

For a map of the Emergency Burning Restrictions area and the current fire danger, visit dnr.wi.gov keyword “fire danger”