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FROM: Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### ARAPAHOE COUNTY IMPLEMENTS OPEN BURNING BAN

Effective immediately, the Arapahoe County Sheriff has issued a ban on all open fires and open burning within Unincorporated Arapahoe County. The Arapahoe County OPEN BURNING BAN will continue to be in effect until this order is formally rescinded or temporarily suspended by the Sheriff. Arapahoe County Sheriff Grayson Robinson, with the support of the Board of County Commissioners, has determined that the existing conditions in Unincorporated Arapahoe County present an extreme danger for the possibility of wildfire and large wild-land fires. The authority to implement the **OPEN BURNING BAN** within Unincorporated Arapahoe County is provided through Arapahoe County Ordinance 2000-02, as well as Colorado Revised Statutes 30-10-512.

**Open fires or open burning shall be defined as any outdoor fire, including, but not limited to: campfires,**

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warming fires, fires in outdoor wood-burning stoves (chimney sparks), use of all fireworks, and the prescribed burning of fence lines, fence rows, fields, farmlands, rangelands, wildlands, trash or debris. The Arapahoe County OPEN BURNING BAN is enforced as a County Ordinance violation that, upon conviction, could result in fines of \$500.00 for the first offense, \$750.00 for a second offense, and \$1,000.00 for a third and subsequent offenses.

The Arapahoe County Sheriff, or his designee, has the authority to grant exceptions to the fire restrictions, on a temporary basis, if certain conditions exist, which may warrant special consideration. The **Open Burning Ban** will be cancelled when the current extreme fire hazard no longer exists.

#### OPEN BURNING BAN EXCEPTIONS

The following shall be exempt from the **Burning Ban**:

Fires contained within liquid-fueled or gas stoves, fireplaces and wood-burning stoves within buildings.

Small charcoal or gas grill barbecues used for cooking or warming food, which do not produce open flames when used.

Fires set by any federal, state, or local officer, or member of a fire protection district in the performance of an official duty.

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Public fireworks displays with adequate firefighting personnel and equipment assigned to be on the scene of such permitted public displays.

“While the **OPEN BURNING BAN** may have an impact for some residents of our community, in the best interests of life safety and property preservation, I respectfully request your cooperation to reduce the potential of fire loss in unincorporated Arapahoe County” said Sheriff Robinson.

The following fire safety recommendations are provided for Arapahoe County residents to protect property from fire:

Rural property owners should trim vegetation to a distance of 50 feet from all structures.

In wooded areas, ground vegetation should be trimmed to reduce the potential of fire spreading to structures.

Vacant lots should be mowed.

Fire-breaks, of at least 20 feet in width, should be cut along fence lines.

Maintain garden hoses close to residences, to aid in containing SMALL fires that involve an area of vegetation that is less than 10 square feet in size.

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Do NOT attempt to fight fires involving a structure, fires threatening a structure, or fires that are larger than 10 square feet.

In all cases, IMMEDIATELY contact your local fire department by calling 911 or a local emergency phone number. Attempt to evacuate all occupants, from buildings, to an area of safety and await the arrival of the fire department.

NEVER re-enter a building that is burning as the smoke and heat of a fire is the leading cause of death and severe injury.

For additional information contact Sheriff Grayson Robinson at 720.874.4165 or your local fire department.

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