

Communicating Fire

Telling the Story Clearly, Consistently, and Professionally

A Simple Overview of Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy - 2009

- Response to wildland fire will be coordinated across levels of government regardless of the jurisdiction at the ignition source.
- Wildland fire is a general term. It describes a non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. There are two distinct categories:
 - Wildfires – unplanned ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared wildfires
 - Prescribed fires – planned ignitions
- A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives, which can change as the fire spreads.
 - Objectives are affected by changes in fuels, weather, and topography; public understanding and tolerance; and involvement of governmental jurisdictions that may have different missions and objectives.
- Management response to a wildland fire on federal land is based on objectives established in the applicable land, resource and/or fire plan.
- Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions.
 - The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.

Source: *Guidance for Implementation of Wildland Fire Policy*

Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - A Simple Checklist

Make sure photos of firefighters on the line that you disseminate to the media and the public include these basics:

- ☐ Hardhat
- ☐ Fire shelter
- ☐ Nomex™ shirt and pants
- ☐ Sleeves on shirt rolled all the way down
- ☐ Gloves (unless in the act of writing or using radio)
- ☐ Eye protection - goggles / safety glasses
- ☐ 8-inch fire boots

If the photo does not include the above items, do not use it.

Source: *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*



Simplify, Simplify, Simplify... Fire Press Releases Do Not Need to Be Complicated

Press releases should include:

- How the fire started
- What is planned to be done: what the park is doing about the fire
- Current conditions: size, location, as well as concerns
- Why: prevent loss/damage of ... or achieve benefits for...
- Where: location work is being done
- When: timing of work activities – now or in the future
- How: what resources will be used
- Who: agencies/people involved
- Safety messaging: always include critical safety messages

Source: *NIFC External Affairs*

Take a very close look at any image you include with a press release to ensure that firefighters are wearing proper safety equipment and showing appropriate safety practices.

Produced by National Interagency Fire Center External Affairs (NIFC EA)

For more information, visit http://www.nifc.gov/PIO_bb/staff.html