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PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

San Juan County Commission Restricts Certain Fireworks for 2021 Season

Historic drought and fire conditions have led to restrictions to reduce some fire risk.

AZTEC, NM—Tuesday the San Juan County Commission acted to restrict the sale of certain fireworks during the 2021 season. Fireworks will go on sale June 20.

At the request of San Juan County Fire & Rescue, the San Juan County Commission adopted a proclamation to limit the sale of all missile-type rockets, helicopters, aerial spinners and stick-type rockets within the unincorporated portion of San Juan County. The proclamation goes on to limit the use of permissible fireworks to areas with barren ground, or paved, and have a water source readily available nearby. The use of any fireworks in areas covered partially, or wholly, by native grass, brush or trees is totally banned.

These limitations are as extreme as allowed by state law; there is no mechanism by which counties can ban fireworks totally.

More than 70% of San Juan County is classified as D4, Exceptional Drought. With that ranking comes exceptional fire danger. As a result, San Juan County Fire and Rescue has ceased issuing burn permits for those living in Bloomfield, Kirtland and the unincorporated portions of the county as of May 14. Burn permits will not be issued until there is a drastic decrease in fire danger.

“The whole county is dry and we don’t want even one spark to fall and be the cause of a wild fire,” said **San Juan County Fire Chief John Mohler**, “This minimal restriction is hopefully enough to mitigate the fire danger for the Fourth of July season this year. Thank you to the San Juan County Commission for adopting these restrictions. We urge residents to be doubly cautious this year.”

In the last 5 years, San Juan County Fire & Rescue has responded to 46 fires which were caused by fireworks. Over the last 10 years, there have been almost 100 firework-caused fires.

Additionally, San Juan County will again make the north parking lot at McGee Park available starting June 20, 2021, for residents who wish to light fireworks on paved ground and avoid fire danger to the extent possible. Use of McGee Park’s north parking lot is free, but residents are asked to clean up any trash from the parking lot and complete any fireworks by 10:00 pm. Trash cans will be provided.

Fireworks may be sold through July 6, 2021. McGee Park’s north parking lot will be open for fireworks through July 10, 2021.