

What is the Grassland Fire Danger Index and what should I do when I see a Grassland Fire Danger Index Product?

The Grassland Fire Danger Index, issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) in Johnston, IA serves as an advisory to all to be aware that a high fire danger exists. Our goal is to reduce the number of uncontrollable outdoor fires. The index is an indication of rural fire potential throughout the state and provides citizens with needed information about fire safety conditions. The index contains five ratings: **low, medium, high, very high and extreme**. NWS DMX will only issue the RFD product for **very high** or **extreme** conditions. Fires are more likely to occur on higher index days and more likely to grow in size. The Fire Danger Index does not predict how a fire will behave. However, the indices will give an indication of overall fire activity.

Very High Grassland Fire Index – Definition:

Fires spread rapidly and show erratic behavior. Dangerous burning conditions exist.

Outdoor Activity Guidelines for the Very High Grassland Fire Index

Open Burning:

Use appropriate fire tools and monitor the fire at all times. Restrict burning to early morning and late evening hours when low wind conditions exist.

Some Examples of Fire Tools:

Small burns (yard litter): Fire Extinguisher, Water pails, Hose, Shovel, Rake.

Large Burns (fields, prescribed burns): Fire Truck(s), backhoes, shovels.

Some Examples of Outdoor Burning:

Campfires: Clear area around fire.

Brush, Field, Ditch, Haystack: Clear fuel from the area surrounding the burn site.

Off-Road Motorized Travel:

Carry fire extinguishers and fire tools. Pay attention to fire hazards posed by exhaust systems and catalytic converters.

Smoking:

Restrict smoking to areas free of combustible materials. Use ashtrays and proper disposal containers.

Equipment Operations:

Carry fire extinguishers and fire tools, as recommended.

Examples

Farming: Conduct frequent inspections of farm machinery to reduce debris accumulation.

Welding: Use spark arresters as recommended and keep a 10-foot radius surrounding a welding site cleared of combustible material.

Railroads: Make sure exhaust arrester systems and brakes are properly functioning and do not create excessive heat.

Extreme Grassland Fire Index – Definition:

Potential for large fires exists. Fires spread rapidly. Extreme fire behavior is probable. Critical burning conditions exist.

Outdoor Activity Guidelines for the Extreme Grassland Fire Index**Open Burning**

Open burning is not recommended and may be prohibited by county officials. Open burning does not include fires in enclosed chambers that pass through a chimney or a stack and utilized on a flat surface.

Off-Road Motorized Travel

Off-road motorized travel is not recommended except for persons engaged in a trade, business or occupation where it is required. Make sure equipment is in good working order. Fire extinguishers and appropriate fire tools are required.

Smoking

Restrict smoking to inside of vehicles, places of habitation and areas cleared to mineral soil. Use ashtray and proper disposal containers.

Equipment Operations

Farming: Conduct frequent inspections of farm machinery to reduce debris accumulation. Remain at the work site one-half hour after operations are completed.

Welding: Use spark arresters, as required, and keep a 10-foot radius surrounding a welding site cleared of combustible materials. Water tanks with 100 gallons and 100 feet of hose are required.

Railroads: Ensure exhaust arrester systems and brakes do not create excessive heat.