



**Custer County Sheriff's Office**  
Sheriff Lloyd R. Smith

**February 24, 2026**

**Stage I Fire Restrictions Now in Effect - Custer County**

After consultation with the Wet Mountain Fire Protection District Fire Chief, the National Weather Service and a thorough review of current fire danger conditions, along with the possibility of a red flag warning tomorrow, Sheriff and Fire Warden Rich Smith has implemented **Stage I Fire Restrictions** for **Custer County**, effective immediately on February 24, 2026.

Under Stage I Fire Restrictions, the following activities are **prohibited by statute**:

- **Open burning**  
(Exceptions: Fires and campfires in permanently constructed fire grates in developed campgrounds and picnic grounds; charcoal grills and wood-burning stoves at private residences if the area is cleared of all flammable materials within a three-foot radius.)
- **Use of fireworks, explosive targets, model rockets**, or any outdoor pyrotechnics without a professional display permit.
- **Outdoor smoking**, except:
  - Inside an enclosed vehicle or building
  - Within a developed recreation site
  - While stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials
- **Welding or operating acetylene or similar torches** with an open flame, unless in a cleared area free of vegetation.
- **Operation of internal combustion engines** without a properly installed and functioning spark arrestor.
- **Prescribed burns**  
(Any previously issued permits are now revoked.)

These restrictions will remain in effect until modified as specified in **Custer County Resolution 18-17**.

These fire restrictions do not apply to the US Forrest Service or BLM which have not issued a fire restriction. However, users of these public lands should use extreme caution.

**Stay Informed and Prepared**

For updates, visit:

[Custer County Sheriff's Office Website](#)

To sign up for **Everbridge emergency alerts** (cell phone, landline, text, or email), use the link below:

[Sign up or update Everbridge contact info](#)

Know your neighborhood's fire evacuation route:

[View Fire Evacuation Routes \(PDF\)](#)

**Respectfully,**  
**Sheriff Rich Smith**

702 Rosita Ave - #1489  
Westcliffe, Colorado. 81252  
719-783-2270

