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CAMPFIRE CAUTION



NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION (DEC)

Campfires that aren't properly extinguished can quickly grow and spread, as seen by this Adirondack Park wildfire.

DEC has forest fire concerns amid dry weather

THE POST STAR STAFF

ALBANY – The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is urging the public to be extremely careful with outdoor fires to help avoid the dangerous risks caused by recent dry weather.

DEC Commissioner Amanda Lefton announced Friday that fire danger conditions are elevated, as much of the state is abnormally dry, beyond what is typical for this time of year.

"We know that we've got a high risk of fire out there right now," Lefton said in an announcement. "That's due to dry conditions; the humidity is going to be pretty low comparatively. We're not going to see much rain in the forecast, so that makes it great to go outside, but unfortunately, that also means that our risk for fire, during a little bit of a drier part of this fall, is higher."

In recent weeks, DEC Forest Rangers have responded to multiple wildfires and encountered causes including unattended or improperly extinguished campfires. People often think a fire has been extinguished, but in dry conditions, hot embers can burn into the ground where they can smolder for days or even weeks before being detected as a wildfire, DEC reported.

Due to high fire danger and extended dry conditions, campers, hunters, and other outdoor recreationists are discouraged from building campfires outside established fire rings or pits, which help contain the fire. If you feel strongly that you must have a campfire, DEC urges everyone to keep it small and extinguish it completely. To properly extinguish a campfire, pour copious amounts of water on the fire, stir any remaining coals to mix the water into the fire bed, and make sure the fire is cool to the touch before leaving it.

To help prevent wildfires, DEC says to never discard ashes from campfires, charcoal grills, woodstoves, or cigarettes on vegetation or the forest floor; refrain from smoking in areas with flammable vegetation or organic soils; do not drive off an established road or park on top of vegetation, as hot mufflers and catalytic converters can ignite vegetation that touches them and never leave a fire unattended.

Anyone who encounters a wildfire in the forest should dial 911 to report the fire and be prepared to give the location of the fire to first responders. If you encounter unattended campfires on DEC lands, contact Forest Ranger Dispatch at 1-833-NYS-RANGERS (1-833-697-7264).

AG: GM must pay $220M for selling drivers' info

THE POST STAR STAFF

ALBANY – New York Attorney General Letitia James announced Thursday that a coalition of Attorneys General has secured $220 million from General Motors after the company had been selling private data from drivers.

James reported that General Motors had been illegally selling drivers' private driving and location data to data brokers, who then sold it to insurance companies. After an investigation by the coalition, which includes James and 35 other attorneys general, the company will pay $220 million, including $12 million to New York. General Motors will also be required to limit the data that it collects from consumers to help protect their personal information as part of a comprehensive data privacy program.

"New Yorkers should never have to worry about a car company tracking their every move when they get behind the wheel," said James in a statement. "General Motors collected data on their customers' personal driving habits without their knowledge and then sold it, potentially affecting their insurance rates. Today, we are putting a stop to this illegal violation of drivers' privacy."

Please see GM, Page A2



DEREK GEE, BUFFALO NEWS

New York Attorney General Letitia James speaks to media following the annoucement that General Motors must pay $220 million for selling drivers' info.

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