

Fire prevention tips for target shooters

Officials with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest are warning people to be extra cautious while engaging in activities that could start a wildfire.

Weather conditions have been changing in the past couple of weeks with consistently higher temperatures and decreased humidity levels, resulting in drier vegetation that is more prone to the spread of wildfire.

This is especially true for people engaging in target shooting on public lands. Numerous wildfires have been started by target shooting in past years in many Western states including Nevada. Many of those fires could have been prevented or stopped had the shooters been prepared or refrained from shooting during hot, dry and windy conditions.

Here are a few target shooting safety tips:

- While shooting, have a 5-gallon bucket of water or 2.5-pound fully charged fire extinguisher readily available to put out a fire.
- Bring a shovel. Use the shovel to dig a trench around targets before shooting to ensure that any fire caused by sparks can be easily contained.
- Shoot at quality steel targets designed to minimize risks to both the shooter and environment. Refrain from shooting steel targets during hot, dry, and windy conditions.
- Place targets on dirt or gravel areas clear of vegetation. Placing a target in dry grass increases the risk of fire.
- Do not shoot trash and remove spent cartridges. Trash

like old couches and TVs can often be found illegally dumped on public lands, but can be dangerous fire hazards when shot.

- All types of ammunition can start fires under the right conditions. To avoid a chance of sparking, do not use solid copper, steel-core, or steel-jacketed ammunition and always avoid shooting in rocky areas.

- Fireworks, exploding targets, and incendiary or tracer ammo are prohibited on public lands.

- Do not smoke. Even if people are following all safety precautions in regard to shooting, they can still easily start a wildfire by smoking.

- Park vehicles away from dry grass. The hot undercarriage of a car or truck can easily create enough heat to ignite the grass.