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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Backyard Burning Season Opens Monday, October 15

The backyard burning season opens Monday, October 15, for most residents in Lane County. However, residents are reminded that burning is prohibited year-round within the city limits of Eugene, and is greatly restricted for residents of Springfield.

“Generally, most residents who live outside the Urban Growth Boundary of Eugene and Springfield are allowed to burn under LRAPA rules,” said Kim Metzler, of LRAPA. “However, some areas, such as Oakridge and the city of Florence, have enacted ordinances that further restrict burning.”

For this reason, LRAPA recommends residents call their local fire departments for information regarding restrictions on burning in their areas before they burn. Willamette Valley residents should always call LRAPA’s open burning line, 726-3976, before burning to verify that burning is allowed on any given day. Coastal residents can call 997-1757 for daily outdoor burning advisories.

Residents who are allowed to burn are reminded that burning only woody yard debris generated on their own residential property is allowed, and that all fires must be out by sunset. A first offense violation of LRAPA’s open burning rules may result in a \$500 fine.

“LRAPA wants to remind residents that although burning might be allowed in their area, smoke from open burning exposes individuals to harmful pollutants, including particulates and air toxics. The agency asks residents to dispose of debris by composting, chipping, or recycling whenever possible to avoid exposing others to harmful emissions,” Metzler said.

LRAPA regularly receives citizen complaints about backyard burning. “People are becoming less and less tolerant of open burning, even during the burning season. It’s a serious health concern for many people.” Metzler said.

Residents can dispose of yard debris for a minimal charge at several collection depots, including Lane County transfer sites at Glenwood, Cottage Grove and Florence, Lane Forest Products (345-9085) and Rexius Forest By-Products (342-1835).

Things residents can do to reduce impacts from open burning:

- * Keep piles covered and dry until ready to burn;
- * Burn only wood debris;

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- * Use a chipper whenever possible, and burn only what is necessary; and
- * Burn well within the property line away from other homes.

Likewise, the Department of Forestry reminds residents to follow safety precautions to prevent backyard burn piles from escaping into wildfires. They ask residents to:

- * Clear a trail around the burn pile down to mineral soil;
- * Keep a shovel and a supply of water handy at the site; and
- * Constantly attend the burn site until the fire is completely extinguished.

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