



# Communicating Fire

Telling the Story Clearly, Consistently, and Professionally

## A Simple Overview of Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy - 2009

- Response to wildland fire will be coordinated across levels of government regardless of the jurisdiction at the ignition source.
- Wildland fire is a general term. It describes a non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. There are two distinct categories:
  - Wildfires – unplanned ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared wildfires
  - Prescribed fires – planned ignitions
- A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives, which can change as the fire spreads.
  - Objectives are affected by changes in fuels, weather, and topography; public understanding and tolerance; and involvement of governmental jurisdictions that may have different missions and objectives.
- Management response to a wildland fire on federal land is based on objectives established in the applicable land, resource and/or fire plan.
- Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions.
  - The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.

Source: *Guidance for Implementation of Wildland Fire Policy*

## Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - A Simple Checklist

Make sure photos of firefighters on the line that you disseminate to the media and the public include these basics:

- Hardhat
- Fire shelter
- Nomex™ shirt and pants
- Sleeves on shirt rolled all the way down
- Gloves (unless in the act of writing or using radio)
- Eye protection - goggles / safety glasses
- 8-inch fire boots

*If the photo does not include the above items, do not use it.*

Source: *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*



## Simplify, Simplify, Simplify... Fire Press Releases Do Not Need to Be Complicated

Press releases should include:

- How the fire started
- What is planned to be done: what the park is doing about the fire
- Current conditions: size, location, as well as concerns
- Why: prevent loss/damage of ... or achieve benefits for...
- Where: location work is being done
- When: timing of work activities – now or in the future
- How: what resources will be used
- Who: agencies/people involved
- Safety messaging: always include critical safety messages

Source: *NIFC External Affairs*

*Take a very close look at any image you include with a press release to ensure that firefighters are wearing proper safety equipment and showing appropriate safety practices.*

Produced by National Interagency Fire Center External Affairs (NIFC EA)

For more information, visit [http://www.nifc.gov/PIO\\_bb/staff.html](http://www.nifc.gov/PIO_bb/staff.html)