



## TONTO NATIONAL FOREST

# NEWS RELEASE



Tonto National Forest, 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85006 [www.fs.usda.gov/tonto](http://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto)

For Immediate Release  
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## Smokey's Domain

A host of variables are evaluated by land management experts to determine wildfire danger. Information in Smokey's Domain is provided to help you understand those variables.

**Payson Ranger District Fire Danger Rating on: 4-10-2014 was: HIGH**

### When you see a fire danger rating sign, what do the ratings actually mean?

- **LOW**> Fuels do not ignite readily from small firebrands although a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or dry, decayed (punky) wood. Weather and fuel conditions will lead to slow fire spread, low intensity, and relatively easy control with light mop-up. There is little danger of spotting. Controlled burns can usually be executed with reasonable safety.
- **MODERATE**> Fires can start from most accidental causes, but with the exception of lightning fires in some areas, the number of starts is generally low. Expect moderate flame length and rate of spread. Short distance spotting may occur, but is not persistent. Fires are not likely to become serious and control is relatively easy. Although controlled burning can be done, without creating a hazard, routine caution should be taken.
- **HIGH**> All fine dead fuels ignite readily and fires start easily from most causes. Unattended brush and camp fires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are attacked successfully while small. Outdoor burning should be restricted to early morning and late evening hours.
- **VERY HIGH**> Fires start easily from all causes and, immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning in light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn in heavier fuels. Both suppression and mop-up will require an extended and very thorough effort. Outdoor burning is not recommended. Fire restrictions may be in effect.
- **EXTREME**> Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious. Development into high intensity burning will usually be faster and occur from smaller fires than in the very high fire danger class. Every fire start has the potential to become large. Expect extreme, erratic behavior. **NO OUTDOOR BURNING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AREAS WITH EXTREME FIRE DANGER.** Fire restrictions are generally in effect.

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## **Energy Release Components**

Also known as ERCs

**Payson Ranger District ERCs on 4-9-14 were: 87**

**ERCs predicted for 4-10-14: 85**

**The following is provided to help you:**

- The Energy Release Component (ERC) is a National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) index related to how hot a fire could burn. It is directly related to the 24-hour, potential worst case scenario, total available energy (BTUs) per unit area (in square feet) within the flaming front at the head of a fire. The higher the ERC, the higher the potential fire danger. ERCs indicate the percentage of time when conditions hit this threshold of fire danger based on weather data gathered since 1995 to now. Example: ERCs reaching 97 percentile would mean that fire danger has only reached this threshold of critical fire danger three percent of the time since 1995.

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