



## Board Summary Report

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**File #:** 26-288

**Agenda Date:** 6/9/2026

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**To:** Board of County Commissioners

**Through:** Tyler S. Brown, Sheriff

**Prepared By:**  
Nathan Fogg, Director, Office of Emergency Management

**Presenter:** Nathan Fogg, Director, Office of Emergency Management

**Subject:**  
Restrictions on the use of fireworks in unincorporated Arapahoe County based on high fire danger

**Purpose and Request:**

Based on current evidence and predictive reports, the Office of Emergency Management is requesting that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) make a finding of high fire danger and restrict the use of Colorado legal fireworks during the period of June 9 to July 5, 2026, with the understanding that if conditions substantially improve the restriction can be lifted.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** Safe and Healthy Communities - Advance public safety by strengthening partnerships across law enforcement, emergency response, and community stakeholders.

**Background and Discussion:** The Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office supported by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) monitors fire conditions during normal fire season, and more recently during shoulder seasons, those months on the front and back end of the traditional fire season. Based on that monitoring program, OEM established a local fuels monitoring program focused on 10-hour fuels. These records can be found online and are linked to this report. The Board heard and discussed this data at their study session on June 8, 2026.

10-hour fuels are recorded twice daily Monday to Friday. Additionally, OEM accesses the closest Federal RAWS (Remote Automated Weather Station) at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal open space to track changing fuel conditions in the 1- and 10-hour model.

Fuels are measured in 1-, 10-, 100-, and 1000-hour models. In order, that correlates to plains style grass, shrubs, large brush, and fully developed trees. These measurements mean the fuel can transition from fully wet to fully dry in the given number of hours.

Combining those local measurements with reported data from the National Weather Service, National Interagency Fire Center's Predictive Services Unit and peer-reviewed research from the Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory, OEM is presenting information for the BOCC to evaluate current and predicted conditions in order to determine if high fire danger exists and is likely to continue.

The BOCC, according to statute, has to make a determination of high fire danger based on competent scientific evidence. The BOCC, based on the totality of comments and evidence from the public and from the OEM, can decide if high fire danger exists in order to restrict the use of fireworks, including Colorado legal fireworks, during the period of June 9 to July 5, 2026. If the BOCC does find high fire danger exists, the use of fireworks during the above period is restricted and enforceable under Arapahoe County Ordinance 2026-02. If they do not, Colorado legal fireworks would be permissible while other fireworks that leave the ground, often known as Wyoming fireworks, would continue to be illegal.

The Sheriff's Office seeks, based on current and predicted conditions, for the BOCC to make a finding of high fire danger and restrict the use of Colorado legal fireworks during the period of June 9 to July 5, 2026, with the understanding that if conditions substantially improve the restriction can be lifted.

**Alternatives:** The Board could decide not to make a finding of high fire danger. The use of Colorado legal fireworks would be permissible.

**Fiscal Impact:** The Sheriff's Office understands the fireworks vendors procure stock well ahead of the holiday sales season and is not asking to prohibit the sale in an attempt to minimize impacts to these family based small businesses. By prohibiting the use in accordance with fire danger the sales are allowed to continue, while use is restricted until conditions improve. OEM knows from previous discussions with the vendors that community members purchase fireworks for year-round use during this sales season; this temporary restriction does not impact that. In summary, this limitation may have some impact on sales volume and consumer purchasing habits, though we do not have a good way to measure those impacts currently.

**Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies:** N/A

**Staff Recommendation:** The Sheriff's Office recommends a finding of high fire danger and the restriction on the use of fireworks with the condition that the restriction can be rescinded if conditions improve.

**Concurrence:** N/A