

Public Service Announcement
Joshua Tree National Monument
Broadcast KCDZ 107.7

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Good Afternoon, this is Park Ranger Debbie Ohlfs at Joshua Tree National Monument with today's monument message.

Greek legend has it that Prometheus stole fire from heaven and brought it to humans as the supreme gift, where man used it to cook food and fashion tools. Zeus, the king of gods, said fire was reserved only for the gods. He was raged and ordered that fire become a curse as well.

As we enter into fire season, we see that the gift of fire comes as a mixed blessing. It contributed to the advance of civilization, but likewise has produced some of civilization's greatest disasters. Currently fires are raging in 9 western states and have burned 150,000 acres. Wildfires raging out of control are an awesome and terrifying site. They arouse our fear. The damage they do is appalling.

As this burning goes on every year it threatens life and property, spoils the naturally beauty of our lands, increases soil erosion, threats community water supplies, and can damage trees and wildlife. What can we do about it?

The best way to keep wildfire damage low is to keep fires from getting started. There are two basic sources of wildfires. One is nature. Summer thunderstorms that pass through area often seem to have as much lightening as rain. Wildfires caused by lightening from storms can cover a wide area and set multiple fires in remote areas where they are difficult for firefighters to reach and put out, so they can become large fast.

Over the country as a whole by far most of the fires- and most of the damage-are caused by people. 9 out of every 10 fires are set by people. Whether they are by the carelessness of a campfire that has not been properly extinguished, or those fires that are deliberately or maliciously set.

While the fire danger in Southern California continues, everyone is asked to be extra careful during the dry summer season. In Joshua Tree National Monument, the restriction of open fires in government provided fire rings has been discontinued at this time. Open fires are, of course never allowed outside government provided fire rings anywhere in the monument.

Since people cause 90% of wildfires, that means we all have a part in preventing them. It's up to you to decide. Is fire a gift from Prometheus or a curse from Zeus? Only you have the power to prevent the gift from becoming a curse.

For Joshua Tree National Monument, this is Park Ranger Debbie Ohlfs returning you back to Z107.7