Wildfire Danger High Due to Dry, Windy Conditions

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

Fire danger is high in Kodiak right now due to lack of snow cover and precipitation. Bayside Fire Chief Bob Himes said the fire department responded to three fires this weekend.

“Two of which were unattended fires. One was an unattended controlled burn, and the other one was an unattended campfire. The other fire, we’re not sure what started it yet, but it was a grass fire at Mill Bay Beach. The biggest problem we have right now is people leaving fires unattended and burning. We need to make sure there is an adult in attendance at all times and they are completely out before you leave.”

Himes said 9-year-old kids were found playing with the abandoned campfire at Mill Bay Beach, which was very concerning. He said dry spells are actually fairly common in the spring time, but are typically short lived.

“It’s typical this time of year until things green up. It usually doesn’t last this long, usually we get some precipitation in there. But we haven’t had anything in a week, other than a little bit of snowfall, and there’s nothing predicted for another week. So things are very dry out there.”

Burn permits are required year round in city limits and throughout the borough. Himes said the permits are free and easy to obtain.

“For the borough road system, outside of city limits and outside of Coast Guard property those are available on the borough web page. Just go online and fill it out and you get your permit. And of course for inside the city limits you need to get it at the city fire station and on Coast Guard property at the Coast Guard Fire Station.”

In general, Himes said people need to be aware of their surroundings when starting a fire and make sure they have something available to put the fire out when needed.