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## Police arrest San Patong man for starting fires



***Police announced the arrest of a 38 year old San Patong man for setting a fire in a reserved forest area in violation of the 60 day burning ban.***

### ***Nopniwat Krailerg***

San Patong police announced the arrest of a local man for starting fires in violation of the 60 burning ban recently. Police said that a neighbor had reported that someone was starting fires in Nam Bor Luang village near the forest.

Pol. Col. Anak Sripho said that police went to the scene and found 38 year old Pattana or Kiewpang starting a fire near his house in Moo 6. Police found a lighter in his pocket and he also confessed to police that he had started the fire in one spot with the lighter and then tried to expand the fire by using dried bamboo to spread the fire along a line.

Officers charged him for being in violation of the 60 day burning ban under the Forest Act. B.E. 2484 (1941) Section 54 about construction, destruction, burning or doing anything to illegally destroy forests. He was also charged under the National Reserved Forest Act, B.E. 2507 (1964) and addition correction B.E. 2559 (2016) Section 14 "in area of national reserved forest, no one is allowed to take of possession or to live in the land construct, destroy, burn, or any actions to illegally destroy the national reserved forest"

Chiang Mai Province issued an announcement that the burning bad would be strictly enforced and a **5,000 baht reward** will be given to those whose information leads to the arrest of someone setting fires. Reports can be made with the Chiang Mai Smog and Wildfire Problem Solving Directing Center at 053 112236 or call 191 for the 24 hour hotline.



## Special volunteer units to be assigned to monitor hot spots



***Col. Sretapol Khetem, Deputy Commander of Military Circle 33 chaired a training program to put out forest fires at Phu Ping Palace where locals were taught fire prevention strategies.***

### ***Nopniwat Krailerg***

A team of 25 volunteers per community has been assigned to coordinate with organizations involved to monitor for forest fires and hot spots.

Chiang Mai Deputy Governor Phuthipong Sirimart, as the chairman of the working committee at the Pollution Control Department, said that all respective districts should collaborate and monitor forest fires and stop them from the source before the air gets more polluted. The monitoring should take place 24 hours and be on the look out to nearby districts as well, and to report of any forest fires or hotspots discovered. Village chiefs and community leaders must also make public announcements to request cooperation and give warnings to residents.

Additionally, a team of 25 volunteers per community should be established to coordinate with organizations involved as well as monitor the hotspots. This way injuries and potential damage or casualties can be prevented.

“We should all be aware of what causes fires and put them out immediately if seen or contact authorities if the situation is out of hand. The air quality is poor as usual, due to forest and crop burning and that can result in major health issues if not looked into. We are urging all residents to take part as being an eye of the community and to put out or report of any forest fires to the Forestry Department or other involved. For more details, contact Chiang Mai City Hall at 053-112-236” said the deputy governor.



## Water sprayed to increase moisture in the air



### ***Nopniwat Krailerg***

The Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Center area 10 sprayed water into the air at Chiang Mai City Hall in a bid to reduce dust and increase moisture in the air. Although A4Thai website reports PM10 levels as being within acceptable ranges the high temperatures and dry weather led the officials to spray water.

Komsan Suwanampa, Director of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Center area 10, Lampang led officers and 4 supported water spraying trucks and 2 high pressure hose trucks or Fire Robot LUF 60 to spray water into the air for 30 minutes to reduce dust in the air due to road construction in front of Chiang Mai City Hall.

Komsan Suwanampa said that the Director-General of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation ordered the center to coordinate with Local Disaster Prevention and Mitigation offices to work with the Ministry of Interior, Local Administration Organization, Office of Natural Resources and Environment, and the Third Army Area to prevent and monitor wild fire and smog in the North. In addition, two trucks of Fire Robot LUF 60 were used in this mission. The Fire Robot is very helpful, especially, in the area which is narrow, hard to access, or dangerous. The said robot can be controlled by radio to walk into the target within 300 meters.

The Director-General of Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation ordered all 18 areas of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation centers to prepare to support the mission in the North where these problems happen every year during the dry season.

Lampang has seen many fires, especially at Doi Prabhat, Muang and Mae Moh so the center set up a directing and support center to support the area for quick operations.

The website <http://air4thai.pcd.go.th/> reports air quality numbers updated regularly. The Northern Meteorological Center said that the North would see higher day tie temperatures while the Upper North part was still cold in the morning and night. The Lowest temperature was 16-20 degree and highest temperature was 35-37 degree. Weather on top of mountain would be cold to very cold with lowest temperature at 7-12 degrees.





## Sixty day burning ban to curtail smoke and haze begins February 20



***Governor Pawin Chamniprasart announced the burning ban will begin February 20 and run through April 20, anyone caught burning will be prosecuted.***

### ***Nopniwat Krailerg***

Chiang Mai Governor Pawin Chamniprasart announced the start of the annual 60 day ban on burning in Chiang Mai at a recent committee meeting. He called on the private sector, schools and other organizations to help prevent fires during the period that will end April 20, 2017.

Chiang Mai governor urges organizations involved to prevent forest fires within 60 days

The Governor said that officials have appointed patrol units and urged all concerned to stop any fires in the Chiang Mai area and to inform officials about burning. People caught burning will be prosecuted. He added that an education campaign informing farmers and others of the

penalties and asking for cooperation to not burn fields and forests. They have also included information on the health hazards the annual smog brings to local people.

The Governor added that the word has been given that all sectors involved will be making public announcements that from February 20 – April 20 no burning will be allowed anywhere.

Anybody who sees any burning activity can report to 053-112-236, 053-232-019, 053-525-128, 053-271-610 or the Chiang Mai Police at 191. For more information, visit <http://123.242.165.5/wncm/> or [www.cmuccdc.org](http://www.cmuccdc.org).





## Government promotes bio-mass energy production from corncobs

*Smoke and pollution reduction by using alternative methods*



*Farmers learn how to convert their corncobs to usable charcoal with a great reduction in the amount of smoke added to the atmosphere when compared to traditional open air burning. The use of incinerators also ensures the corncobs have added value by being turned into usable charcoal.*

### ***Nopniwat Krailerg***

The Chiang Mai Energy Office held a workshop to train local people in Mae Chaem district on the process of producing bio-mass energy from corncobs rather than just burning them in the open last week.

Teerasak Jaratsriwisit, Chiang Mai Energy Officer, opened the workshop session for villagers



in a bid to raise awareness and educate them on alternative methods of disposing of agricultural waste. The villagers learned how to convert their corncobs by using an incinerator to create charcoal. The workshop was attended by community leaders, Local Administration Organizations, residences from Mae Chaem totaling 100 people.

Mae Chaem is the main area for corn planting and has a large amount of agricultural waste.



## Chiang Mai kicks off campaign to tackle wild fires and smoke



### ***Nopniwat Kraierg***

In a bid to combat the annual smoke that plagues Chiang Mai and the North the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Commander and Director of the Regional Wildfire and Smoke Prevention Center launched the campaign to combat fires.

Lt. Gen. Wijak Siribansob chaired the opening ceremony of the annual event where he was joined by Chiang Mai Governor Pawin Chamniprasart, Lt. Gen. Thana Jaruwat of the Center, and Mae Rim District Officer Padsadej Hongladrom.

Four sets of firefighting equipment were given to the Chairman of the Mae Rim Sub-district headmen and Village headman organization, as well as to the Pong Yang Sub-district headman, Pong Yang Sub-district Mayor and Don Kaew Sub-district Mayor.

Additionally the event was held to bring together all elements of the campaign to fight fires including local administration organizations and Chiang Mai residents to learn more about the problems of smoke and wildfires. The campaign includes education about the dangers of wildfire and smoke to health and attempts to create participation at the local level in reducing the problem.

The 3rd Corps Commander as Director of Regional Wildfire and Smoke Prevention and Solution Center said that despite having water sources the regions faces fires and smoke every year from February to April resulting in damage to the environment and health of the residents. Usually it is caused by human activity; burning agriculture waste, grass on the side of the roads and in the forest. This often spreads and ends up out of control. He added that less than 30 percent of the smoke came from neighboring countries. He said that wildfire and smoke can be controlled and reduced by a strong campaign for awareness and raising participation by government, private, and people by stopping all kinds of behaviors that cause wildfire and smoke. He added that although, wildfire and smoke was under control last year to satisfactory levels, this year it is a concern and all sectors must be ready to fight any wildfires immediately.

The Center is in charge of planning and controlling 14 public campaigns to combat wildfires and smoke in cooperation with the government and local administration organizations to solve the problem in the nine Northern provinces. The Army is following HM Queen Sirikit's royal command concerning people in the North that are suffering and being affected by wildfire and

smoke. In addition, Her Majesty wants everyone to commit to cooperate to solve and reduce the problems.



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