



CAL FIRE/Butte County Fire

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NEWS RELEASE

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CAL FIRE Investigators Arrest Suspect for Allegedly Starting Ponderosa Fire

Butte County – CAL FIRE law enforcement officers arrested John Ballenger, age 29 of Oroville, on Tuesday, August 29, 2017 on suspicion of causing the Ponderosa Fire. Ballenger is suspected of recklessly starting a campfire outside a designated campground and allowing it to escape. The fire was reported to CAL FIRE’s Emergency Command Center in Oroville at 1:11 p.m. on August 29, 2017.

“All campfires pose a risk of escaping. A campfire should never be left unattended and must be extinguished completely before everyone leaves,” said Chief Darren Read of CAL FIRE/Butte County Fire.

Remember these tips before you light a campfire:

- You must have a valid permit
- Campfires should only be ignited in approved campfire rings
- Use a shovel to clear an area at least 5 feet in diameter
- Never leave a campfire unattended
- Drown campfires with water and stir all ashes
- Feel ashes with the back of your hand to make sure they are cool before leaving the area

For more information on how to prevent wildfires before they start, visit: readyforwildfire.org



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