



A crew scrapes a fire line in the forest floor just yards from the March Hill fire near the Andover-Hill town line. Photo: Jake Johnson

## Fire Burns 84 Acres Near Andover Town Line

By Jake Johnson  
East Andover Fire Department

On April 4, a woods fire broke out on March Hill near the town line between Andover and Hill and burned a total of 84 acres. Thirty fire department members from East Andover, Andover, Hill, Danbury, Wilmot, and Franklin turned out to contain the blaze.

Crews immediately set to work constructing a fire line. A fire line is the removal of leaf matter on the forest floor, down to bare ground, to control the spread of the fire. The fire line containing the March Hill fire was close to two miles long and took four hours to complete.

To build a fire line, you stand about an arm's length apart. Each member rakes the forest floor with a forestry tool, then takes a step, and then another rake of the forest floor, and on and on and on.

A good fire line is anchored to a road, a body of water, or a burned-out area. This helps to ensure the fire will stay contained to the burn-out area.

The crews also had to remove burning trees from near the fire line, felling the burning tree back into the burning area, away from the fire line. If the burning trees were left standing, any one of them could fall over the fire line and start a fire in the unburned forest. It was not a rare sight at the March Hill fire to see large old trees burning.

With the fire contained, another



A crew fells a burning tree back into the burning area to keep it from falling across the fire line and spreading the fire. Photo: Jake Johnson

crew pumped water from a beaver pond about 4,500 feet below the fire line. They established a water supply and started actually putting the fire out.

On the second day of the fire, April 5, crews used the water to do what is referred to as "mop-up," in which they put the fire out 250 to 500 feet into the burned area. Beyond that wide perimeter, the middle is left to burn out or get a good dose of rain.



Millie, an English labrador owned by Kathy and Wyman Ordway, is catching some rays at the Town Beach. She would be delighted to be able to play on the beach and enjoy the water. Photo and caption: Judy Perreault

### Clean-Up from page 1

- Andover Historical Society clean-up in Potter Place on Saturday, May 12, at 10 AM.
- Proctor Academy will celebrate Earth Day on Friday, May 11.

Please join us for the fourth annual Andover Town Clean-Up Week to make our entire town landscape the beautiful Andover that we call home.

### Beach Clean-Up By Judy Perreault

I'm sure everyone would like a clean Town Beach area to picnic, swim, and sunbathe. While Milli (see photo above) has her hat, blanket, and sunglasses,

dogs are not allowed on the Town Beach, except for photo shoots.

Let's not allow our Town Beach to "go to the dogs!" Bring your rakes, leaf blowers, and bug spray, and help clean up the Town Beach and picnic area on Saturday, May 19, at 9 AM.

Lloyd Perreault will be on hand with his tractor to haul all the debris away. If we have a large number of volunteers, we can have the job done in record time.

*Cleaning the beach is what we do,  
Lest we step in doggie poo.  
A beautiful beach we've been endowed.  
No butts, cans, or dogs allowed.  
Come one, come all on cleaning day.  
Don't forget, it's the 19th of May.*

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