

What Does Each Fire Danger Level Mean?

EXTREME (Red)

Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely. All fires are potentially serious. Development into high intensity burning will usually be faster and occur from smaller fires than in the very high fire danger class. Every fire that starts has the potential to become large. Expect extreme, erratic behavior. **NO OUTDOOR BURNING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AREAS WITH EXTREME FIREBEHAVIOR.** Fire restrictions are generally in effect at this level.

VERY HIGH (Orange)

Fires start easily from all causes and immediately after ignition, spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Spot fires are a constant danger. Fires burning in light fuels may quickly develop high intensity characteristics such as long-distance spotting and fire whirlwinds when they burn in heavier fuels. Both suppression and mop-up will require an extended and very thorough effort. Outdoor burning is not recommended. Fire restrictions may be in effect at this level.

HIGH (Yellow)

All fine and dead fuels ignite readily, and fires start easily from most causes. Unattended brush and campfires are likely to escape. Fires spread rapidly and short-distance spotting is common. Fires may become serious and their control difficult unless they are attacked successfully while small. Outdoor burning should be restricted to early morning and late evening hours.

MODERATE (Blue)

Fires can start from most accidental causes, apart from lightning fires in some areas, the number of starts is generally low. Expect moderate flame length and rate of spread. Short-distance spotting may occur but is not persistent. Fires are not likely to become serious and control is relatively easy. Although controlled burning can be done without creating a hazard, routine caution should be taken.

LOW (Green)

Fuels do not ignite readily from small firebrands although a more intense heat source, such as lightning, may start fires in duff or punky (insect killed) wood. Weather and fuel conditions will lead to slow fire spread, low intensity and relatively easy control with light mop-up. There is little danger of spotting. Controlled burns can usually be executed with reasonable safety.

RED FLAG WARNING

Is a short term, temporary warning indicating the presence of dangerous combinations of temperature, wind, relative humidity, fuel or drought conditions which can contribute to new fires or rapid spread of existing fires. A "Red Flag Warning" can be issued at any of the above Fire Danger levels.

FIRE WEATHER WATCH

The potential for severe fire weather exists in the near future. A watch is used when there is a relatively low probability of occurrence and less chance of verifying. A Fire Weather Watch normally will be issued 12 to 24 hours in advance of the expected onset of severe fire weather conditions. The fire danger rating is usually in the high to extreme category.