



Nevada Site Office News

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Protecting the Nevada Test Site During Wildland Fire Season

With the wildland fire season officially underway and the National Interagency Fire Center (www.nifc.gov) stating there could be a higher than average number of wildland fires, the National Nuclear Security Administration has taken a number of steps to prepare both the Nevada Test Site and the people who would be called upon to fight any potential wildland fires.

Throughout the Great Basin and the desert regions where the Nevada Test Site is situated, available plant fuel sources and the ongoing drought conditions have increased the likelihood of wildland fires.

Certain actions have been taken to mitigate the impacts to Nevada Test Site facilities and open range areas certain actions have been taken.

- Clearing along both sides of major test site roads has occurred to create larger fire breaks.
- Annual vegetation assessments are conducted to prioritize removal of fuel sources near utilities and critical facilities.
- Remotely operated zoom cameras have been positioned around the test site to enhance wildland fire detection, thus increasing the response time of firefighting personnel.
- All-terrain vehicles have been outfitted to enable test site firefighters to have better access to fight fires. The vehicles contain 14-gallon plastic tanks filled with special foaming agents capable of producing 25-gallons of foam per gallon of water.
- Heavy equipment operators have received fire training. These individuals bulldoze access roads and firebreaks and can get large water masters closer to a fire scene to soak at risk areas.

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In the past, the majority of wildland fires were caused by lightning. As a result, weather prediction and tracking play an important role in preparing for, and responding to, a wildland fire. Nevada Test Site Fire and Rescue personnel receive twice daily test site specific forecasts. In addition, alerts to weather conditions such as severe lightning are provided immediately so fire personnel can be on standby.

Finally, the National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office maintains Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Air Force and the test site prime contractor to address specific wildland fire protection issues. These MOUs provide procedures for quickly elevating the national priority in acquiring offsite resources to fight test fires as is necessary.

For more details on wildland fire protection at the Nevada Test Site, please see the fact sheet titled "*Protecting the NTS from Wildland Fires.*" It is located at www.nv.doe.gov and can be accessed through a direct link on the websites front page.

Additionally, should any significant emergency occur at the Nevada Test Site, information concerning that emergency would be posted to the Emergency Public Information link on the above web site.