

For Immediate Release

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Officials Urge Extra Fire Safety Precautions as Conditions Grow Extreme

With several large wildfires burning in the state and fire danger reaching extreme levels, the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, Department of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service urge Oregonians to take extra precautions to protect homes near forests and to avoid starting fires.

“Forecasts are not only calling for hotter and drier conditions throughout the state, but also thunderstorms,” warns Oregon State Fire Marshal Mark Wallace. “We are again urging homeowners to take preventive actions to help defend against possible wildfires. The most critical factor is for homeowners to remove or reduce flammable fuels within a 100-foot safety zone around their home.”

Oregon State Forester Doug Decker underscored Wallace’s assessment of the fire situation and appealed in particular to forest recreationists and to those who may visit or drive through forestlands in the coming days.

“The predicted weather, coupled with the bone-dry condition of forest fuels, means any fire start in the forest could grow rapidly,” he said. “This is a time to be extra-cautious with fire or power-driven equipment in any kind of wildland setting.”

Nora Rasure, Deputy Regional Forester for the Forest Service’s Pacific Northwest Region, stressed the importance of maintaining perspective at this time of escalating wildfire activity.

“As always, our highest priority remains public and firefighter safety. No structure or natural or cultural resource is worth the loss of human life. We will work together as a firefighting community to utilize effective risk management tools to assess every fire, and apply the right resources at the right place at the right time.”

Wildland fire agencies are already fighting large fires in Oregon and across the region. As a result, fire engines, aircraft, hand crews and fire managers are in short supply. It is crucial that recreationists and forest workers take extra care to avoid starting new fires when resources are already stretched thin.

A variety of restrictions related to commercial forestry operations, smoking, campfires and other activities are already in effect across the state. Forest visitors should check with forestry agencies locally before heading out.

Fire prevention and safety tips can be found on the [Oregon State Fire Marshal website](#), the [Keep Oregon Green website](#), and at www.firewise.org

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