

Dept. of Natural Resources: Fire danger remains very high across most of Wisconsin

Posted on Monday, May 9, 2022

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MADISON, Wis. – After a busy weekend of fire activity across the state, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is asking the public to again remain vigilant and avoid burning as fire danger remains very high across most of Wisconsin.

With continuing dry conditions and high winds, the DNR is anticipating possible powerline fires and other causes resulting from unintended sparks. Many counties have suspended DNR burning permits.

Areas with VERY HIGH fire danger today include Adams, Ashland, Bayfield, Brown, Buffalo, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Door, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green Lake, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Monroe, Oconto, Outagamie, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Shawano, Sheboygan, St Croix, Trempealeau, Vilas, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago and Wood counties.

Areas with HIGH fire danger today include Barron, Burnett, Columbia, Dodge, Lincoln, Oneida, Ozaukee, Polk, Sauk, Taylor, Washburn and Washington counties.

Green-up is progressing nicely in the southern part of the state, but the northern part is still quite dry with lots of fuel on the ground like dead leaves and dry grasses. Although there is some rain in the forecast, it is spotty, and there are minimal chances of rain particularly in northeastern Wisconsin. This, combined with wind gusts of up to 50 mph in some areas, put many counties, especially in the north, at peak wildfire risk.

More than 70 wildfires occurred over the weekend, making it the busiest weekend of the season so far. Debris burning and equipment accounted for the majority of these wildfires.

Be fire smart. Remember – fire danger and burning restrictions change every day.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS

- Avoid all outdoor burning until conditions improve. Burn permits for debris burning are currently suspended in numerous counties.
- Operate equipment (chainsaws, off-road vehicles, lawn mowers, etc.) early in the morning or late in the day to avoid sparks at peak burn hours.
- Secure dragging trailer chains.
- Delay having campfires until the evening hours as fire conditions tend to improve; keep them small and contained. Make sure they are completely extinguished before leaving them unattended.
- Report fires early, dial 911.

Check daily fire danger, wildfire reports and burning restrictions on the DNR website at bit.ly/WiFireDanger.