

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Dry Winter has CAL FIRE on Alert

Sacramento –Yesterday, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) conducted the year’s first snow survey which has CAL FIRE officials concerned about increased fire danger. The lack of precipitation across the state has led to one of the driest winters on record. According to DWR the statewide water content is at 19 percent of normal.

Despite the fact that many areas of the state are experiencing cooler temperatures, the drier than normal conditions, coupled with wind events and low humidity, have frequently increased the fire danger over the past month. Last month CAL FIRE crews responded to an increased number of wildfires for a typical December.

“Fire activity in northern California during winter is very rare, where snow covered mountains and rain soaked hillsides typically keep the fire danger relatively low,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. “We will be monitoring the rain levels over the next couple months, as it will be an indicator of the type of fire activity spring and summer will bring.”

In response to the above normal fire activity, CAL FIRE has been able to increase its staffing using its 4,700 permanent employees with the help of CAL FIRE inmate fire crews. In many areas CAL FIRE has cancelled burn days or even banned debris burning. The public is asked to be extra cautious due to the dry conditions, especially on windy days.

For more fire safety tips visit www.ReadyForWildfire.org or www.fire.ca.gov.

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