

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CAL FIRE Urging Caution for Memorial Day Weekend Severe Drought Leading to Higher Fire Threat

Sacramento - Memorial Day weekend is often considered to be the kick-off for summer vacations and outdoor activities, but CAL FIRE officials are asking the public to use caution as fire danger remains higher than normal. As the weekend approaches, temperatures are forecast to increase leading to a higher fire threat in California.

“We are asking the public to be extra vigilant and take steps to prevent sparking a wildfire,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. “All it takes is a single spark to start a fire and with the dry conditions caused by drought, we are seeing fires burn with unseasonable intensity.”

Since the beginning of the year, wildfires have already caused major destruction. Most recently Southern California endured wildfires fanned by Santa Ana winds, burning nearly 27,000 acres and destroying dozens of homes. California is in the midst of a severe drought, creating conditions that are ripe for devastating and extremely dangerous wildfires. Everyone is encouraged to be vigilant and remember that one less spark is one less wildfire.

Camping:

- Obtain a campfire permit (www.PreventWildfireCA.org)
- Check for local fire restrictions
- Clear away grass, leaves and other debris within a 10-foot perimeter of any campfire
- Have a responsible person in attendance at all times
- Ensure all campfires are completely extinguished before leaving
- When barbequing, never leave the grill unattended

Fire is not the only danger that can occur in the outdoors, as water drownings also increase dramatically during the holiday weekend. Warm temperatures make the cool waters of California’s beautiful rivers and lakes very enticing, yet very dangerous. In recent weeks, CAL FIRE crews have responded to water rescues across the state, many of which have tragically led to fatalities.

In the Water:

- Always wear a life jacket!
- Children should always be supervised by a responsible adult
- Never swim alone
- Drinking and swimming is just as dangerous as drinking and driving.

For more ways to be safe this holiday, visit www.ReadyforWildfire.org or www.fire.ca.gov.