

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Strong Winds Prompt CAL FIRE Crews to High Alert Public Urged to be Cautious Outdoors

Sacramento – With gusty dry winds forecast for Southern California, CAL FIRE has increased its staffing and is urging the public to be extra cautious as fire danger heightens. The Weather Service has issued a Fire Weather Watch for many areas in Southern California starting Tuesday for high winds with gusts of 55 mph along with low humidity lasting through Thursday.

"The drought has set the stage for a very dry and potentially dangerous fire season," said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. "Fire season never really ended last year in Southern California and these strong winds will only elevate the current fire risk."

Over the past several months, CAL FIRE has hired additional seasonal firefighters across the State and bolstered fire equipment staffing months earlier than normal. In advance of the latest wind event, CAL FIRE has increased its preparedness by staffing additional fire engines, bulldozers, fire crews, and aircraft. These state resources will be positioned strategically to allow for rapid response into communities and watershed areas that may be affected by a fast moving wildfire. Already this year, CAL FIRE has responded to over 1,100 wildfires that have charred over 2,500 acres. In an average year for the same time period, CAL FIRE would typically respond to 500 wildfires for just over 1,300 acres.

"We have extra firefighters and equipment available to respond to new wildfires during this wind event," said Chief Dale Hutchinson, CAL FIRE Southern Region chief. "While we are prepared, we are reminding residents to be extremely cautious while outdoors in order to prevent a wildfire. One less spark, means one less wildfire."

CAL FIRE asks Californians to remember '*One Less Spark, One Less Wildfire*' and offers the following tips to prevent a wildfire:

- Don't mow or weed eat dry grass on windy days
- Ensure campfires are allowed, and if so, be sure to extinguish them completely
- Target shoot only in approved areas, use lead ammunition only, and never at metal targets
- Be extra careful with all powered equipment outdoors including chainsaws, tractors and welders

For more ways to help prevent a wildfire visit [PreventWildfireCA.org](#) and to prepare for wildfires visit [ReadyForWildfire.org](#).

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