

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Don't Let Cool Weather Fool You This Memorial Day Weekend *CAL FIRE asks the public to take steps to prevent new fires and stay safe!*

Sacramento – Despite most of California experiencing mild weather conditions heading into the holiday weekend, CAL FIRE urges everyone to be cautious and not let their guard down. To keep everyone safe while planning to recreate outdoors this Memorial Day, CAL FIRE is asking the public to take steps to prevent sparking a new wildfire.

“Although most of California is experiencing seasonal temperatures, the dry climate means that we are continually susceptible to wildfires,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. “We all need to do our part to ensure we are being safe when working or recreating outdoors by taking precautions to avoid sparking a wildfire.” Since January 1, CAL FIRE has responded to over 1,200 wildfires that have burned nearly 8,000 acres.

If you plan on going camping:

- If you plan on having a campfire, make sure it is legal to do so. Clear away grass, leaves and other debris within a 10-foot perimeter of the ring; make sure all campfires are completely extinguished before leaving. Buy your firewood where you will burn it that way you aren't spreading dangerous insects and diseases, which can kill trees. If your campsite is more than 50 miles away, call the state or federal park or forests closest to the site and ask if they know of local distributors. Leave locally purchased un-burned firewood at the campsite for the next campers when you leave.
- Make sure to obtain a campfire permit at (www.PreventWildfireCA.org) and check for local fire restrictions.
- If you are grilling, never leave the grill unattended, and always watch what you grill.

If you plan on driving to your holiday destination:

- Ensure your vehicle is properly maintained with nothing dragging on the ground, which can cause a spark and potentially a wildfire.
- When towing, make sure trailer chains are properly secured, and never drive or pull over into dry grass, which can start a wildfire.

Fire is not the only danger that can occur in the outdoors, as water drownings also increase dramatically during this holiday weekend.

- As the snowpack continues to melt, the rivers and lakes will run fast and cold, making them very dangerous. When you are in the water never swim alone and if you aren't a strong swimmer, always wear a life jacket.
- Children should always be supervised by a responsible adult within arm's reach.
- Be particularly cautious of rivers and waterways with rapid currents and never underestimate calm water.
- One last thing, drinking while boating/swimming is just as dangerous as drinking and driving on the roadways.

Californians are encouraged to be safe this holiday weekend and remember that One Less Spark means One Less Wildfire. For more ways to be safe this holiday, visit www.ReadyforWildfire.org or www.fire.ca.gov.

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