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## Fire Alert Continues for Alabama

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A Fire Alert remains in effect across the state. The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) issued the burn restriction on September 22 because of the current drought situation, continued lack of precipitation, and high probability of fuel ignition. Since October is historically the state's driest month, drought conditions are expected to worsen.

Weather predictions for the upcoming weekend include the arrival of two cold fronts, potentially bringing low relative humidity and gusty winds. Risk of wildfire is extremely high right now; just about every region of the state has been experiencing a steady increase in wildfire activity. Effective Friday, October 6, permits for outdoor burning will no longer be issued until further notice. Anyone burning a field, grassland, or woodland without a burn permit may be subject to prosecution for committing a Class B misdemeanor.

"The Fire Alert is not going away until we receive significant precipitation, meaning several inches of rainfall," said State Forester Rick Oates. "Unfortunately, there is no rain in sight, so the restriction must remain in effect indefinitely. With this extremely dry weather, any fire can quickly spread out of control threatening lives and livelihood, not to mention destroying our forests."

According to AFC Fire Analyst Ethan Barrett, "Another thing to consider during drought conditions is that fires may persist or smolder for days in piles of debris. If anyone has burned in the past few days, they should closely monitor the burned area to prevent re-ignition of embers. In light fuels such as grass and leaves, there is potential for escape of fires. Large diameter fuels (limbs 3' or greater in size), may continue to burn for days, if not weeks."

To report a wildfire, call the Alabama Forestry Commission at (800) 392-5679. For more information on the current wildfire situation in the state or any other forestry-related issues, contact your local AFC office or visit the agency website at [www.forestry.alabama.gov/Pages/Fire/Totals.aspx](http://www.forestry.alabama.gov/Pages/Fire/Totals.aspx). The Alabama Forestry Commission is the state agency committed to protecting Alabama's invaluable forest assets as well as its citizens.

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