

Wildland Fire Prevention
Recommended
Preparedness Criteria

Prepared for

National Fire Prevention Team Leader

5D-02-P410-HO

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I. The Preparedness Plan

Preparedness plans are required at the national, state, forest and local levels. They are determined by using a logical combination of the following parameters.

- The magnitude of a NFDRS component or index (or live fuel moisture indicator) compared to decision thresholds as in described in agency standards;**
- An indicator of fine fuel loading, described as a departure from normal;**
- Committed Initial Attack resources on and off unit;**
- Current and expected fire occurrence (number and size of fires);**
- Fire weather watches and red flag warning.**

II. Preparedness Level Action Items

Actions should be taken at each planning level, with safety being the primary consideration for any action taken. Local preparedness plans serve as guides and should support the items addressed in the geographic or national preparedness plans. They should include, but not limited to, the following items:

- **Management direction and considerations.**
- **Fire prevention actions including closures/restrictions, media messages, signing, and patrolling.**
- **Pre-positioning of resources.**
- **Cooperation discussion and/or involvement.**
- **Safety considerations.**
- **Augmentation of suppression forces.**
- **Support considerations.**
- **Communications of fire weather watch and red flag warning conditions.**
- **Fire danger/behavior assessment.**
- **Briefings for management and fire suppression personnel.**
- **Fire information, internal and external.**
- **Multi-agency coordination groups/area command activation.**
- **Prescribed fire direction and considerations**

III. Seasonal Risk Analysis

A Seasonal Risk Analysis requires fire managers to step back, review current and predicted weather and fuels information, compare this information with historic weather and fuels records, and predict the upcoming fire season's severity and duration for any given area. It is important to incorporate drought indices into this assessment.

Information from a Seasonal Risk Analysis can be used to modify step-up and pre-attack plans. It provides the basis for actions such as pre-positioning critical resources, requesting additional funding, or modifying memoranda of understanding (MOU) to meet anticipated needs.

Each agency location should select and compare to normal, the current value and seasonal trend of one or more of the following indicators which are most useful in prediction fire season severity and duration in its area:

- **NFDRS index values**
- **Temperature levels**
- **Precipitation levels**
- **Humidity levels**
- **Palmer or other drought indicators**
- **1000-hour fuel moisture levels, Live and curing**
- **Episodic wind events**
- **Unusual weather events**
- **Fire to date**

The seasonal trend of each selected indicator is graphically compared to normal and all-time worst. This comparison is updated regularly.

If the Seasonal Risk analysis suggests that an abnormal fire season is anticipated, higher level within the organization should be notified to request additional resources commensurate with the escalated risk.

Risk Analysis is on-going. It should be reviewed periodically and revised when significant changes in key indicators occur. All reviews of risk analysis, even if no changes are made, should be documented.

IV. Fire Prevention/Mitigation

Fire Prevention programs, which effectively reduce human-caused ignitions, target “average” weather conditions, historical fire occurrence, normal fire behavior, and historical human activity. Prior to periods of “above average” fire conditions, human activities, or fire severity, local/regional preparedness planning must appropriately “step-up” prevention program activities to deal with the increased risk and threat of human-caused ignitions and mitigation that reduce losses when fires are not preventable.

When Seasonal Risk Analysis indicate a “increased” potential for fire behavior and/or human-caused ignitions, the predicted situation and current prevention and mitigation must be reviewed to determine and obtain the additional resources required to meet the expected situation.

An inclusive fire severity request includes a “proactive” human prevention and mitigation component developed through interagency preparedness planning, which identifies and activates needed resources to reduce the number of wildland fire ignitions, reduce the threat to communities and decrease exposure to firefighters, as the risk of severe wildland fires increases.

Prevention, mitigation, and outreach resources should be addressed by the following:

- Conducting local/regional interagency needs assessment to determine the appropriate prevention, mitigation, and other outreach resources, and then obtaining these resources through details, and severity requests.**
- Mobilizing a “fire prevention/education team” to plan and implement immediate prevention, mitigation and outreach strategies during periods of abnormal wildland fire risk or activity.**

V. Fire Prevention Preparedness Level Recommendations

All Preparedness Levels – the following apply regardless of the level of fire activity and should be completed prior to the start of the start of fire season.

- **Management Recommendations:**
- ✓ Staffing as per the approved “most efficient level” in place.
- ✓ Adequate fire prevention equipment/vehicle operational.
- ✓ Technical fire prevention training complete for all Fire Prevention/Mitigation Specialists.
- ✓ Fire Prevention/Mitigation Specialists attend technology transfer workshops.
- ✓ Ensure public use fire restrictions/closure plans are updated and prepared for implementation.
- ✓ Complete necessary local fire preparedness review of all fire prevention operations and resolve findings.
- ✓ Review and update the unit fire prevention plan.
- ✓ Fire Prevention/Mitigation Specific Staffing Guide updated and operational.
- ✓ Media Plan completed
- ✓ Community at Risk Assessments completed.

Preparedness Level I

Description: No large wildland fires in progress. Units have low to moderate severity. Number and size of fires within normal range for the time of year. Little or no commitment of other than local resources.

- **Management Recommendations:**
- ✓ All preseason preparedness steps completed.
- ✓ Media plan and contacts in place.
- ✓ Signing program implemented.
- ✓ Community at Risk inspection program implemented.
- ✓ Fire prevention inspections complete on all agency facilities; campgrounds, dispersed recreation sites etc.
- ✓ Industrial fire prevention level system functioning.
- ✓ Fire cause analysis complete and monitoring system in place.
- ✓ Patrol plan complete
- ✓ All community involvement and outreach programs in place.

Preparedness Level II

Description: Units are experiencing moderate to high fire danger with NFDRS. Large fires beginning to occur. Potential exists for initial attack fires to escape and become large project fires.

- *Management Recommendations:*
 - ✓ Staffing levels complete, consider increased staffing.
 - ✓ Media plan activated with weekly contacts.
 - ✓ Special Prevention Activities implemented.
 - ✓ Implement targeted specific actions for high use periods/activities.
 - ✓ Coordinate patrol efforts with other functions; law enforcement, recreation.
 - ✓ Communicate with cooperators.

Preparedness Level III

Description: Units are experiencing high to very high fire danger with NFDRS. Numerous units are having larger wildland fires or prescribed fire activity is on-going. Wildfires are escaping initial attack and reaching 100-300 acres. Holding actions are taking increasing numbers of resources. Type a or 2 teams have been ordered or committed, or area crews or initial attack resources have reached draw down levels.

- *Management Recommendations*
 - ✓ Fire Prevention Specialists should not be assigned other responsibilities.
 - ✓ Fire Prevention Specialists should be committed to their assigned areas.
 - ✓ Establish regular press/media briefings.
 - ✓ Include fire prevention/mitigation in all severity requests.
 - ✓ Consider non-traditional work schedules.
 - ✓ Increase communications with all cooperators.
 - ✓ Evaluate all prevention activities
 - ✓ Consider non-fire support to the fire prevention program.

Preparedness Level IV

Description: Multiple units are experiencing very high or extreme fire danger with NFDRS. Numerous wildland fires escape initial attack and can reach 100-1000 acres. No break in the predicted weather for at least 48 hours. Multiple units require Incident Management team activation, crews and resources are maximum draw down. Competition exists for resources and resources are being mobilized from outside the area.

- *Management Recommendations*
 - ✓ Evaluate restricted public use fire/closure plan and prepare necessary orders.
 - ✓ Increase media effort and consider implementing a media center.
 - ✓ Increase staffing, implement non-traditional partners.
 - ✓ Consider activation of a local/national fire prevention education team.
 - ✓ Ensure all previous preparedness levels are activated.
 - ✓ Coordinate all restriction activities with cooperators.

Preparedness Level V

Description: Major incidents have the potential to exhaust all resources, and numerous new fires continue to occur. Most resources are committed and as they become available they are immediately assigned to other incidents. The majority of new support is coming from outside the area. No break in the weather is expected for at least 48 hours.

- *Management Recommendations*
 - ✓ Evaluate all previous preparedness levels for effectiveness, modify as necessary.
 - ✓ Implement public fire restrictions.
 - ✓ Consider closure of specific areas.
 - ✓ Evaluate the necessary requirements for significant planned high risk events.
 - ✓ Activate a local/national fire prevention education team.
 - ✓ Review specific staffing guide for adequacy.