



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES & PUBLIC PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY



## 2024 October Wildfire Fact Sheet, 10/28/2024

### Weather & Wildfire Situation Update:

- While the Hawthorne Fire is CT's biggest fire at this time, there are at least 50 fires across the state that are active or being monitored and/or patrolled.
- Connecticut is experiencing an exceptionally dry season, with minimal rainfall and strong winds, creating the perfect conditions for fires to spread rapidly. There is very high to extreme fire danger expected as of today, 10/28/2024, and expected to last until the state receive significant soaking rainfall.
- As leaves continue to fall, they create more fuel for fire. There has not been significant rain in CT since August. Therefore, the foliage is very dry. Additionally, the weather has been very windy with a low relative humidity which heightens the fire danger.
- Only around ¼" to ½" of rainfall is forecast during the next two weeks, which is not enough rain to reduce the fire threat.
- When factoring the two-month period of September and October, this is the driest 2-month period on record in CT since 1905. This situation is unique because it is very rare for CT to be this dry at the same time as we lose leaves off the trees.
- The Woodland Urban Interface is defined as the area where human development and undeveloped woodland meet. It's a transition zone where wildfires can cause significant damage to homes, infrastructure, and people.
- Connecticut has the highest percentage of land (72%) in the Woodland Urban Interface in the United States. Connecticut contains approximately 800 million live trees.

### Bans & Regulations in place at the State Level:

- The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) has raised our fire risk level, indicating that even a small spark can quickly grow into a dangerous fire. This remains in effect until we receive significant soaking rainfall.
- As of 10/26/24, there is an emergency burn ban now in effect for all Connecticut State Parks, Forests, and Wildlife Management areas, prohibiting the use of all outdoor grills, firepits, and campfires, and the kindling and use of flame outdoors.
- If you have received a permit from your local Open Burning Official to burn brush on your property, as a reminder, the permit is **not valid** if the Forest Fire Danger is rated high, very high or extreme and you are burning within 100 feet of a grassland or woodland. We are rated at a very high or extreme fire danger therefore those permits are not valid.
- Please look to your local officials to see if there are any burn bans in your municipality.

### Best practices to keep your family, neighbors, and first responders safe while we are in Very High to Extreme Fire Danger:

- Please avoid using open flames outdoors, including campfires, bonfires, fire pits, and outdoor cooking, until further notice. Though it is Halloween week, please avoid open flames for your festivities. Consider a battery-operated light source. Every leaf is potential fuel, so keep your family and neighborhood safe.

- Even something as small as a cigarette can ignite a fire. Dispose of cigarette butts in secure, fire-safe containers.
  - Fire-safe container - galvanized steel metal container that can be covered.
- Do not dispose of fireplace ash outdoors while the fire bans are in place. Ashes should be cool to the touch and disposed of in a fire-safe container.
- Follow Local Guidelines and Bans. It's essential to stay updated with local advisories and follow any fire bans or restrictions in your area. These guidelines are in place to keep everyone safe.
- Practice Safe Grilling. For those who enjoy grilling, make sure grills are on solid, non-flammable surfaces away from dry grass, trees, and structures. Always have water or an extinguisher on hand. Extinguish charcoal completely and dispose of it in a fire-safe container.
- Certain yard work, such as mowing or using power tools that could create sparks, can also increase fire risk. Try to limit these activities on particularly dry and windy days.
- Please use caution when performing anything that could create a spark and have a fire extinguisher on hand.
- If you see smoke or signs of fire, don't wait—report it immediately. Call 9-1-1 as quickly as possible and provide them with the location of the flames. Quick action is essential to prevent a small fire from becoming a larger, more dangerous blaze.
- Avoid parking in high grass as the heat from the exhaust can create a fire.