

# NEWS BRIEF

## 2023 Fire Season Expected to Produce Above-Average Activity

The 2023 fire season is predicted to be relatively consistent with historical averages, with a slight increase in intensity, according to AccuWeather's recently released [2023 US Wildfire Forecast](#).

Between 60,000 to 75,000 wildfires are expected to occur, potentially burning 6.5 million to 8.25 million acres of land. These figures align with the average of 68,707 fires and 7,000,514 acres burned annually between 2001 and 2020.

Because nearly 90% of wildfires are caused by humans, predicting the number of acres that may be affected by widespread fires is difficult.

Read on to learn more about regional wildfire forecasts, as predicted by AccuWeather meteorologists.

### California Wildfire Season May Be Delayed

After a winter filled with rain and snowstorms, California has become the center of attention. The state experienced numerous bomb cyclones and atmospheric rivers, creating a record-breaking snowpack. Although this will push back the start of wildfire season, it will not entirely prevent the outbreak of fires.

High precipitation leads to robust spring growth, which can fuel summer and autumn fires. Severe winter storms that brought down decaying trees and branches will also add to available dried fuel.

California wildfire threat projections are low from April to June. As temperatures rise and conditions become drier, the danger of fires is expected to escalate in July and August.

In Northern California, the peak of the wildfire season is expected from August to September, whereas in Central and Southern California, the most significant threats may occur from September to November, when the critical factors for destructive fires will converge. Lightning strikes due to the North American monsoon can serve as a natural ignition source. The Santa Ana winds, which were absent in most of 2022, can cause wildfire flames to spread rapidly.

Notably, the peak of the wildfire season will coincide with the height of the Atlantic hurricane season.

### Wildfire Season in the Four Corner States Delayed

The winter weather pattern that brought storms to California also resulted in substantial rainfall and snowfall in Nevada and the Four Corner states.

This abundance of moisture may delay the onset of wildfires during the spring, but the risk will gradually rise throughout the summer and into the fall.

### Northwestern Areas Face Heightened Early Summer Wildfire Risk

The interior Northwest and northern Rockies may experience heat waves alongside the heightened risk of wildfires during the next few months.

Dry periods can result in hot weather, as evaporation rates increase and fuels dry out, creating ideal fire conditions. Significant fires have hit the Pacific Northwest hard in recent years, with the Almeda Fire in southern Oregon destroying 2,357 homes in 2020.

### Higher Risk of Florida Brush Fires

Due to dry conditions, an elevated risk of brush fires is predicted in Florida, particularly in late spring.

The threat of fires may subside in early summer as thunderstorms increase, and there may be an early-season tropical system that brings rain to Florida.

## **Alaska May Have Fewer-Than-Average Burned Acres In 2023**

Outside of the western United States, Alaska leads the nation in wildfire activity, with 3.08 million acres burned in 2022, nearly twice the area of Delaware.

While the wildfire-burned acreage in Alaska could be lower in 2023, the numbers may still be substantial. Although most of the fires occur in remote areas, the smoke from these fires can cover the North American sky.

### **Wildfires May Have Far-Reaching Effects**

Vast smoke plumes from fires in Alaska, British Columbia, and the western United States can affect the East Coast, causing a murky sky, a rise in air pollution, and, in severe situations, the odor of smoke, impacting millions of individuals living in the area.

During September 2020, an unprecedented convergence of a historic wildfire season and an extraordinarily active Atlantic hurricane season spread wildfire smoke across the nation.

Major cities such as Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., and New York City experienced hazy skies due to the smoke. Meanwhile, Hurricane Sally struck the Gulf Coast as a Category 2.

During the same month, smoke from fires in California and Oregon was detected as far as Europe.

### **What's Next?**

Contact Venbrook Insurance Services today to review your insurance coverage and learn more about wildfire insurance solutions and preparedness.

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