

April 26, 2012 Wildfire Report

Fire danger has been a mixed bag this week – low danger when rain moved through some areas and high in places where rain was minimal or not received at all. In the past week, 32 wildfires burned 23 acres in DNR protection areas around the state. The leading causes were equipment and debris burning. During these fires, 17 buildings were threatened and one was lost. The largest fire burned 6.6 acres in Juneau County. Burning permits are suspended in some areas due to fire weather conditions. Check out the DNR fire web page for information on fire danger and fire prevention: dnr.wi.gov (search 'fire').

Firewise Tip: Home ignitions can be prevented by managing the area 100-200 feet around your home. Check out the Firewise Landscaping Guide for ideas: dnr.wi.gov (search 'Firewise').

Northern Region

Brule Dispatch Group – Fire danger hovered in the low to moderate range this week. One fire burned .10 acre in Iron County. A high pressure area moving over our area the end of the week will boost the fire danger quickly. Fire crews continue to plan for potential danger in the blowdown areas of northwest Wisconsin.

Cumberland Dispatch reports one wildfire for the week, which burned 0.1 acre in Burnett County. Emergency Burning Restrictions remain in place for the storm damaged areas in Burnett, Polk, Douglas, and Washburn counties. Burning permits are suspended for areas outside of the blow down in Polk, Burnett and Washburn Counties due to predicted elevated fire danger conditions and concerns about potential debris burning hold over fires.

Park Falls Dispatch Group – Over the past week, four wildfires burned just under 3 acres. Fire danger ranged between low and high this week, depending on rain received. A predicted high pressure system moving over the region is expected to bring cool and breezy conditions with low humidity which will cause fire danger to climb.

Woodruff Dispatch Group – Four wildfires burned this week; each was contained before reaching a half acre. The public is urged to be cautious with ash disposal. Ash can harbor embers for a long time. When dumping ash from burn barrels or wood stoves, be sure to soak the ash with water, stir to expose any still-smoldering embers, add more water, and stir again.

Northeast Region

Peshtigo Dispatch Group – Four fires burned four acres in DNR protection areas this week. The largest was a 3-acre fire in Marinette County caused by an escaped campfire on private property. In this case, the campfire was burning during the daytime, was left unattended, and ignited some adjacent grass. The fire caused great damage to a camper trailer and an ATV, threatened other personal property, and burned into a wooded area. Campers are urged to

build campfires in fire rings or designated campfire areas. If you have to create your own fire pit, choose an area that is away from vegetation, keep the fire small, and never leave it unattended. Remember that weather conditions during the daytime tend to be warmer, dryer and windier than nighttime – you may need to put off lighting that campfire until the evening. And always, make sure your fire is out before you leave! Drown the fire with plenty of water, stir the ashes, add more water, and stir again.

Waupaca Dispatch Group – Four wildfires burned one acre this week. A large Canadian high pressure system returns today (April 26) and will remain over the area through early next week. Relative humidity readings will likely drop to near critical levels and are expected to be accompanied by gusty north winds. Keep in mind that on our sandy soils, precipitation this time of year only alleviates fire danger for a short time. The public is urged to put off any debris burning projects during dry, windy days.

South Central Region

Three fires were reported in DNR protection areas this past week. All fires were contained before they burned a half acre. Burning permits are required for burning after 6 pm in DNR protection areas. Any day time burning must have a special burn permit from the DNR Fire Control Ranger. Never leave a fire unattended and always keep a water supply handy.

West Central Region Wildfire News

Black River Falls Dispatch Group – Over the last week fire control staff responded to 1 equipment-caused fire in Clark County which was kept very small in size.

Wisconsin Rapids Dispatch Group – Over the last week 10 fires burned 14.61 acres. Most of the fires were caused by equipment (6). Two were caused by trains and one by debris burning. The largest fire was a 6.6 acre fire in Juneau County which is still under investigation. A total of 16 structures were saved due to suppression efforts on a string of fires in Juneau County that were caused when a road grader threw sparks and ignited four separate fires along a quarter mile stretch of road.