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WILDFIRE NEWS OF THE DAY

United States

California

(1) Although a series of late-season winter storms has filled reservoirs, boosted snowpack and left forecasters anticipating a late start to California's wildfire season, a Riverside-based National Interagency Fire Center meteorologist warned that it's just a little too early to tell at this point what the peak fire season months are going to look like.

After winter storms, California can expect a late start to the wildfire season

<https://www.aol.com/news/winter-storms-california-expect-start-110058928.html>

(2) More than six years after the Thomas Fire blazed through Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, Ventura residents packed a meeting to discuss wildfire preparations, including checking their insurance coverage, with some people finding that they were hundreds of thousands of dollars underinsured.

Ventura residents discuss wildfire preps <https://www.foxla.com/video/1422672>



(3) On Thursday, the California Public Utilities Commission voted unanimously to allow Pacific Gas and Electric to raise rates yet again, ostensibly to cover wildfire mitigation projects, despite the utility reporting last year's profits surged to more than \$2.2 billion, a jump of almost 25%.

CPUC unanimously approves new PG&E rate hike to cover wildfire mitigation projects

<https://abc7news.com/pg-e-rate-hike-cpuc-california-wildfires-bill/14501504/>

(4) At the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's annual board meeting, the Governing Board awarded a little over \$27.5 million to 16 different projects to help with the planning and implementation of forest-health efforts that promote recovery and resilience throughout the Sierra-Cascades.

SNC awards \$27.5 million to help with wildfire recovery and forest resilience throughout Sierra-Cascade <https://sierranevada.ca.gov/snc-awards-27-5-million-to-help-with-wildfire-recovery-and-forest-resilience-throughout-sierra-cascade/>



Colorado

(5) Starting this year, Pueblo Community College Southwest will offer two no-cost certificate programs in forestry and wildfire mitigation and natural resources, with registration opening on March 11th on a first-come, first-served basis.

PCC to offer free certificate programs in wildfire mitigation and forestry

<https://www.durangoherald.com/articles/pcc-to-offer-free-certificate-programs-in-wildfire-mitigation-and-forestry/>

Utah

(6) Moab Valley Fire Department officials have dispatched a 500-gallon brush truck and two firefighters to Oklahoma to join firefighters from around the country as they battle seven wildfires currently burning across the Sooner State.

Moab Valley Fire sending firefighters to Oklahoma <https://www.abc4.com/video/moab-valley-fire-sending-firefighters-to-oklahoma/9498524/>



Texas

(7) As the Panhandle wildfires continue to burn, leaving behind a path of devastation in which two people have died, over 1.3 million acres have gone up in smoke and about 500 structures have been destroyed so far, USAToday provided a map of where the blazes are burning.

Texas wildfires: Map shows scope of devastation, learn how you can help those impacted

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2024/03/06/texas-wildfires-map-2024-panhandle/72863664007/>

(8) Photos captured by the NASA EOSDIS LANCE, GIBS/Worldview, and Landsat satellites from the U.S. Geological Survey show the burn scars left behind by the epic wildfires which have blazed across the Lone Star State.

Vast 'Burn Scar' From Texas Wildfire Revealed in NASA Images

<https://www.newsweek.com/burn-scar-texas-wildfires-smokehouse-creek-fire-1876911>



(9) Residents of Scott's Acres in Hutchinson County are grappling with the harsh reality of their homes being reduced to ash by record wildfires, one volunteer firefighter with the Stinnett Volunteer Fire Department lamenting the loss of his own home.

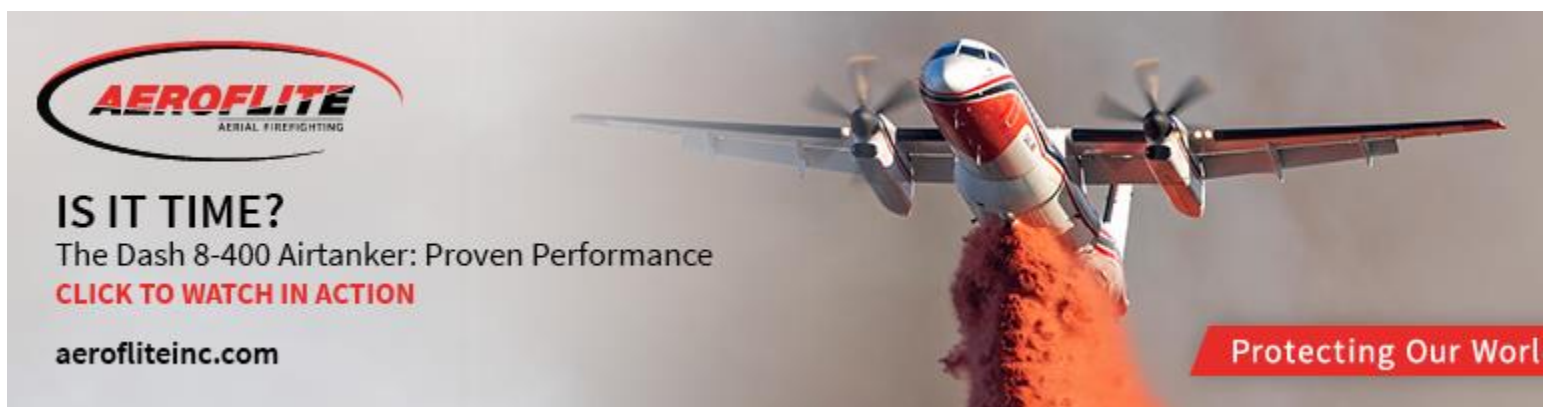
'This fire was a beast': Firefighter loses home while saving others

<https://www.newschannel10.com/2024/03/07/this-fire-was-beast-firefighter-loses-home-while-saving-others/>

(10) The next article provides a tip of the hat to the volunteer firefighters who, typical of firefighters everywhere, ran into the fire area when everyone else was running out, holding the line until state and federal crews, bulldozers and air-tankers, could arrive to help.

As their neighbors fled, these Texas volunteer firefighters raced toward the flames

<https://www.texastribune.org/2024/03/07/texas-wildfire-volunteer-firefighters/>



(11) The Panhandle wildfires are taking a significant toll on the region's agricultural industry, with the Texas Agriculture Commissioner stating that preliminary numbers show more than 7,000 head of cattle have died in the fires, and that the final toll could end up being thousands more.

Over 7,000 cows have died in Texas Panhandle wildfires, causing 'total wipeout' for many ranchers <https://www.kwtx.com/2024/03/07/over-7000-cows-have-died-texas-panhandle-wildfires-causing-total-wipeout-many-ranchers/>

(12) As the biggest wildfire in Texas history churns its way through the Panhandle, fire officials provided a deeper dive into the technology behind U.S. Forest Service, Texas A&M Forest Service, and Texas Army National Guard units fighting those wildland blazes from the air.

Agencies showcase wildfire fighting technologies used during Tx Panhandle wildfires <https://www.newschannel10.com/2024/03/07/state-agencies-showcase-wildfire-fighting-technologies-used-during-tx-panhandle-wildfires/>

(13) City of Tyler officials are reaching out to the public for donations to help people impacted by the Panhandle wildfires, opening a donation drop-off point at the Tyler Recycling Collection Center for donations to people struggling to rebuild their lives.

City of Tyler helping out wildfire victims <https://www.cbs19.tv/video/news/local/city-of-tyler-helping-out-wildfire-victims/501-88f348a1-99c8-4572-865e-268e29a5fbad>

(14) An unlikely bond has formed between a North Texas rancher and a 2 ½ week-old calf burned in one of the devastating wildfires in the Panhandle, adding a heart-warming story to all the tales of tragedy.

North Texas rancher adopts calf from the ashes of the Texas wildfires <https://www.cbsnews.com/texas/news/north-texas-rancher-adopts-calf-from-the-ashes-of-the-texas-wildfires/>

Montana

(15) The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has awarded \$3.1 million in funding to 13 projects across the Treasure State to reduce wildfire risk as well as improve forest health, with the State Fire Suppression Fund being bolstered by an increase in funding through House Bill 883.

DNRC awards millions towards reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health <https://www.ktvh.com/news/dnrc-awards-millions-towards-reducing-wildfire-risk-and-improving-forest-health>

South Dakota

(16) Six wildfires which ignited Wednesday along the west side of South Dakota Highway 79, most of them near Hermosa, prompting a response from multiple departments, were likely sparked by an errant motorist dragging chains.

Motorist leaves trail of flames along SD Highway 79: how drivers can accidentally start wildfires <https://www.kotatv.com/2024/03/08/motorist-leaves-trail-flames-along-sd-highway-79-how-drivers-can-accidentally-start-wildfires/>

Wisconsin

(17) Shawano County Sheriff's Office officials reported that a resident of Navarino is dead after burning brush in a burn pit in the area of Wildwood and Townline roads led to the fire spreading and getting out of control.

Man dies when his burn pit fire spreads into a wildfire in Shawano County

<https://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/news/2024/03/07/man-dies-when-his-burn-pit-spreads-to-a-wildfire-in-shawano-county/72889743007/>

Michigan

(18) The possible return of snow as a cold front rolls into the Great Lakes State has fire officials predicting a reduction in the wildfire danger, although dry conditions will continue due to a lack of abundant precipitation.

Wildfire risk diminishes Friday with cooler temps, rain-snow chances

<https://www.uppermichiganssource.com/video/2024/03/08/wildfire-risk-diminishes-friday-with-cooler-temps-rain-snow-chances-2/>

Missouri

(19) The DeSoto Rural Fire Protection District Chief reported that the number of calls for wildfire outbreaks in Jefferson County has “drastically increased,” amid drought conditions that have spawned nearly three dozen wildfires in the two-week period from February 18th through March 1st.

St. Louis-area fire districts busy due to increase in brush fires

<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/mo/st-louis/news/2024/03/07/area-fire-protection-districts-see-increase-in-brush-fires-due-to-recent-low-humidity--high-winds->

Pennsylvania

(20) Several Rothrock Forest District fire wardens received service awards during the annual Forest Fire Warden Training program, held Wednesday evening in the Shavers Creek Volunteer Fire Co. Community Building, where fire wardens were reminded of their duties combating wildfires and announcements were made about upcoming fire prevention activities.

Forest fire wardens recognized for work https://www.huntingdondailynews.com/news/local/forest-fire-wardens-recognized-for-work/article_894bf773-325c-5eff-aeeb-11be2531e025.html

New York

(21) Because of the lack of snow cover across much of the Empire State this year, Department of Environmental Conservation Forest Rangers have responded to a number of rare February wildfires, including one fire in the Town of Hamilton on February 26th that burned over 20 acres.

Forest Rangers Respond to Wildfires in Herkimer and Madison Counties

https://www.wktv.com/news/local/forest-rangers-respond-to-wildfires-in-herkimer-and-madison-counties/article_7af69abc-dcab-11ee-8bf9-83b8c001ed20.html

Hawaii

(22) Seven months after the deadly Lahaina wildfire, which virtually leveled the historic Maui city, a public information officer for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives' Seattle Field Division noted that the complex nature of what happened is causing the investigation into its cause to take a long time to complete.

Lahaina fire investigators anticipate preliminary report by end of month

<https://www.khon2.com/top-stories/lahaina-fire-investigators-anticipate-preliminary-report-by-end-of-month/>

(23) Maui County officials have announced a new plan to temporarily house wildfire survivors in Lahaina, with the state and FEMA building hundreds of temporary units at a pair of developments

along Fleming Road.

Maui County officials announce plan to temporarily house wildfire survivors in Lahaina

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2024/03/08/maui-county-officials-announce-plan-temporarily-house-wildfire-survivors-lahaina/>



Canada

(24) A SOPFEU (Société de protection des forêts contre le feu) information officer noted that, with the snow melting and the ground beginning to dry already, Quebec's forest fire protection agency is issuing its first warnings of the season on Thursday.

Quebec forest fire agency issues first warning of the season -- its earliest ever

<https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-forest-fire-protection-agency-issues-earliest-ever-warnings-1.6798878>

Latin America

Brazil

(25) Huge understory fires are spreading throughout northern Brazil, including the northern-most state of Roraima, as drought and heat turn the rainforest into tinder, spawning forest fires that are decimating the region.

Roraima's Inferno: A Satellite's Eye View of the Amazon Rainforest in Flames

<https://scitechdaily.com/roraimas-inferno-a-satellites-eye-view-of-the-amazon-rainforest-in-flames/>

(26) A researcher at Brazil's Federal University of Santa Catarina warned that the Amazon may experience unprecedented wildfires this year that could severely damage its vital ecosystems, due to record-high temperatures, severe drought conditions and the El Niño weather phenomenon.

Amazon wildfires could burn at unprecedented scale as El Niño and drought make rainforest 'more flammable'

<https://www.livescience.com/planet-earth/amazon-wildfires-could-burn-at-unprecedented-scale-as-el-nino-and-drought-make-rainforest-more-flammable>

Asia

(27) Forest Survey of India officials said that forest fires have started raging in Maharashtra State, with the National Remote Sensing Centre in Hyderabad reporting that 78 forest fires have broken out from Thane in the western parts of the state to Gadchiroli in the east.

As summer heat sets in, forest fire alerts on the rise

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/forest-fires-in-maharashtra-summer-heat-triggers-spurt-in-incidents/articleshow/108312846.cms>

Oceania

(28) Wildfire NOTD subscriber Kylan Diprose, Director at New Zealand-based v2track (<https://www.v2track.com/>), sent along a press release announcing that Simon Barton, who has spent most of his working life immersed in helicopter rescue and firefighting operations, has joined the v2track team in the role of Business Development Manager.

v2track welcomes Simon Barton <https://v2track.com/simon-barton-joins-v2track-as-business-development-manager/>

Australia

New South Wales

(29) Due to easing conditions and recent rainfall, the Rural Fire Service has declared an early end to the bushfire danger period in a number of northern local government areas, including Coffs Harbour and Bellingen.

Early end to bushfire danger period in Coffs Harbour, Bellingen LGAs

<https://www.newsofthearea.com.au/early-end-to-bushfire-danger-period-in-coffs-harbour-bellingen-lgas>

Victoria

(30) Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC (<http://www.bnhcrc.com.au>), sent along an invitation to a webinar scheduled for March 26th at 11 AM AEDT/10 AM AEST which will focus on developing a child-centered approach to bushfire education.

Hazardous Webinar: From research to practice, developing a child-centred approach to bushfire education <https://mailchi.mp/naturalhazards.com.au/hazardous-webinar-principles-ofculturally-safe-research-practices-3117590?e=4ceed2d92f>

Western Australia

(31) Farmers who supported livestock transporters when a bushfire closed the Eyre Highway on February 21st say state departments failed to help, with requests for help sourcing water and troughs going unanswered for hours.

WA farmers angry over lack of state government support for livestock after Eyre Highway closure <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-03-08/eyre-highway-livestock-farmers-salmon-gums-sam-starcevich-guest/103535154>



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