



## Wildfire Warning Issued

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We've already seen this threat come to life here in the metro this week, but state officials have issued a formal warning about a high risk of wildfires in Nebraska.

On Wednesday, a large fire cut through the dry grass near Lake Cunningham. It rekindles on Thursday.

On Friday, state officials issued a warning that most counties in the state are currently in the High to Very High risk range for such fires.

A lack of moisture and recent high winds have formed a dangerous recipe for fire risk.

Statistics from the Nebraska Forestry Service indicate that the cause of most wildfires involves a human factor. The primary cause of wildfires during five of the last six calendar years was debris burning.

State Fire Marshal Jim Heine says, "There are a few simple steps that we can all follow to avoid unnecessary damage and fire department responses caused by wildfires."

Some of these steps are listed below:

- **Obtain Required Permits:** Nebraska has a continuous ban on Open Burning. This statutory ban against open burning is always in effect unless it has been waived in writing on the prescribed permit form issued by the local fire chief/designee. The fire chief/designee may specify other requirements that must be met by the person to whom the permit is issued. Anyone intending to burn when the burning ban has been waived shall notify the fire chief of his or her intention to burn prior to starting the burn.

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- **Avoid Burning in Windy Weather:** Wind increases fire intensity and the potential for a fire to spread. Also, wind decreases the ability to control the fire.
- **Avoid Throwing Lit Cigarettes on the Ground:** Do not throw lit smoking materials out of a moving vehicle or onto dry vegetation.
- **Know the Risk Potential and Act Accordingly:** Daily up-to-date Nebraska Forest Service Fire Danger [Map link](#) and National Weather Service Fire Weather data are available on the web to help determine the fire risk potential for your specific geographic location.
- **Make Proper Preparations:** Heat producing activities such as fire pits, campfires, trash burn barrels, fireworks, and the use of spark and heat producing tools/ equipment can start a wildfire.
- **Never Leave a Fire Unattended:** Make sure the fire is extinguished before leaving it.

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