



Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Situational Awareness Statement # 3

Subject: Brushfires This Week.

Date/Time: 10/31/2024 3:30PM

Incident or Event Overview
Situation
<p><i>Wildfire activity moderated across the state yesterday. A short window of precipitation was received across the state receiving anywhere from a trace to just over a quarter inch. The Northeastern region including Northern Middlesex County and all of Essex County received the bulk of the precipitation. With warming trends things will dry out quickly rendering surface fuels, like leaf litter, and dead woody material dry and available to readily burn on ignition. Moderated conditions lessened new fire activity and allowed resources to make great progress on active fires.</i></p> <p><i>As of this afternoon a Red Flag Warning is in effect for all of Massachusetts except Berkshire County. A Red Flag Warning means that critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now or will shortly. Any fires that start may spread rapidly and become difficult to extinguish.</i></p> <p><i>High humidity and areas of fog this morning aided with suppressing ongoing fires. However, a drying westerly wind at 8-16 mph, gusting to 20 mph, along with temperatures in the mid to upper 70s, have led to a drop in humidity levels, once again increasing the risk of brush fires.</i></p> <p><i>Conditions gradually worsen into Friday as the wind becomes more southwesterly overnight and will slowly become gustier into Friday with 10-20mph sustained wind and up to 30mph gusts by the afternoon as temperatures once again rise into the mid-70s with a mix of sun and clouds, aside from a few spotty sprinkles in the morning.</i></p> <p><i>A cold front will bring cooler temperatures for the weekend, with daytime highs in the low to mid-50s and overnight lows in the 30s and 40s. Despite the cooler, drier air mass, humidity levels will remain around 40-50% on Saturday and drop to 30-40% on Sunday. Although winds will be lighter over the weekend, these conditions will still support brush fire risks. The chance for any meaningful precipitation remains low over the next week.</i></p>
Hazard Impacts/Potential Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased air pollution from smoke.• Loss of forest stock.• Obstruction of roadways.• Damage to buildings and infrastructure in burn area.
Weather Forecast Overview
Watches, Warnings or Advisories for Massachusetts
Last updated: 3:09pm EST on 10/31/2024
Red Flag Warning <i>10/31/2024 15:04 EDT through 11/1/2024 19:00 EDT</i>

Western Franklin; Eastern Franklin; Northern Worcester; Central Middlesex County; Western Essex; Eastern Essex; Western Hampshire; Western Hampden; Eastern Hampshire; Eastern Hampden; Southern Worcester; Western Norfolk; Southeast Middlesex; Suffolk; Eastern Norfolk; Northern Bristol; Western Plymouth; Eastern Plymouth; Southern Bristol; Southern Plymouth; Barnstable; Dukes; Nantucket; Northwest Middlesex County

Special Weather Statement (Brushfire potential)

10/30/2024 18:57 EDT through 10/31/2024 19:00 EDT

Northern Berkshire; Southern Berkshire

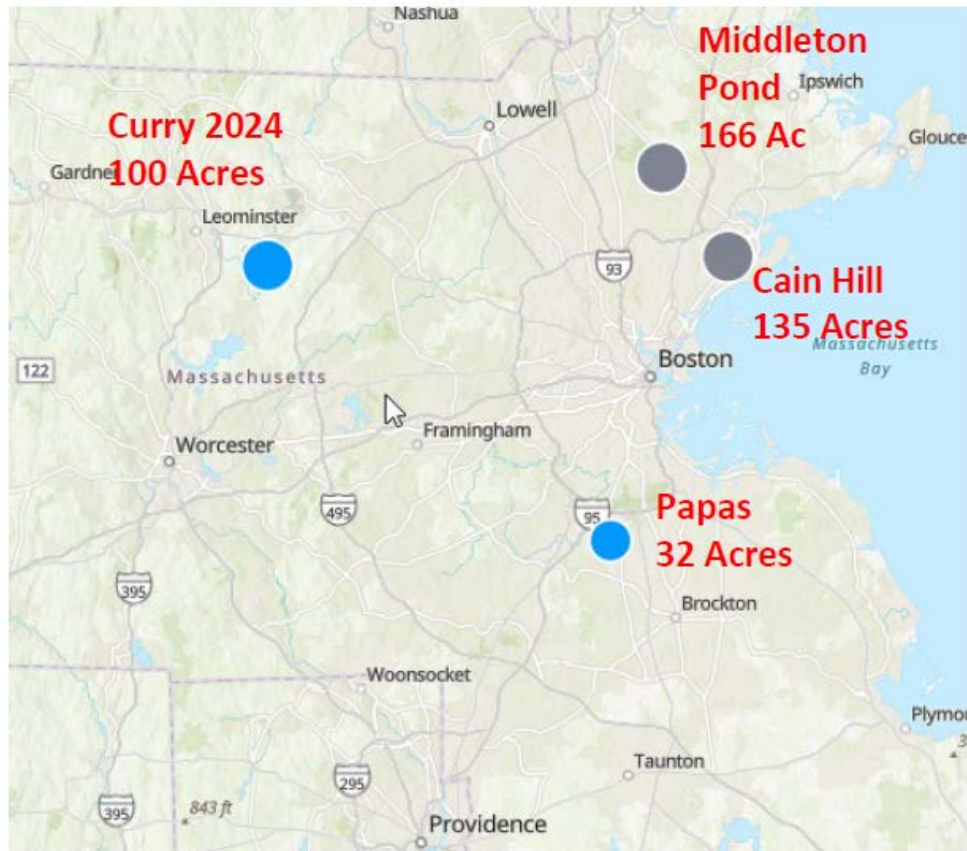
Special Weather Statement (Brushfire potential)

10/30/2024 17:50 EDT through 10/31/2024 20:00 EDT

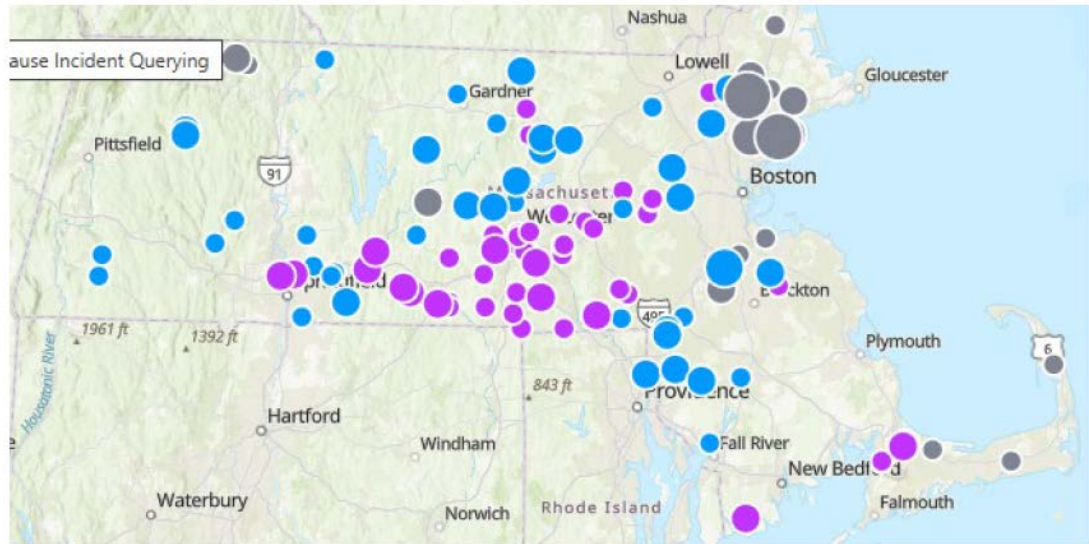
Western Franklin, MA; Eastern Franklin, MA; Northern Worcester, MA; Central Middlesex County, MA; Western Essex, MA; Eastern Essex, MA; Western Hampshire, MA; Western Hampden, MA; Eastern Hampshire, MA; Eastern Hampden, MA; Southern Worcester, MA; Western Norfolk, MA; Southeast Middlesex, MA; Suffolk, MA; Eastern Norfolk, MA; Northern Bristol, MA; Western Plymouth, MA; Eastern Plymouth, MA; Southern Bristol, MA; Southern Plymouth, MA; Barnstable, MA; Dukes, MA; Nantucket, MA; Northwest Middlesex County, MA

More information available at <https://alerts.weather.gov/search?area=MA>

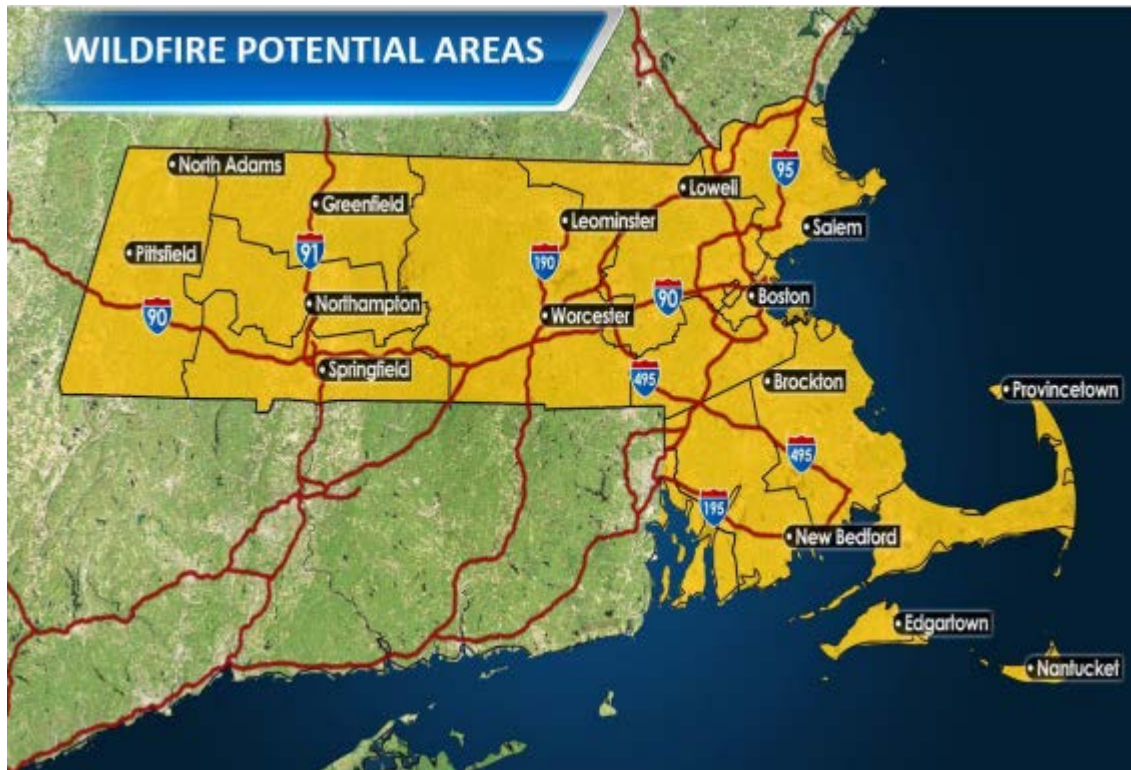
Weather Graphics



Current active large fire locations



7 Day Wildfire Activity Since October 20th



Map released: Thurs. October 24, 2024

Data valid: October 22, 2024 at 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

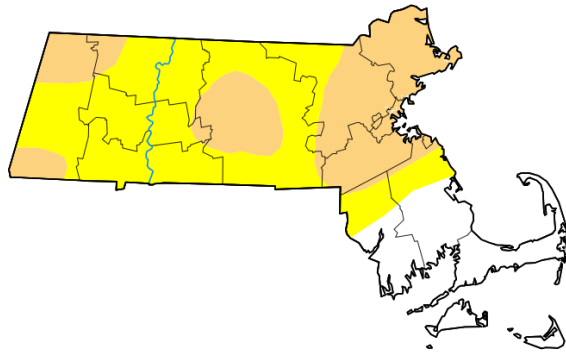
Authors

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[Brad Rippey](#), U.S. Department of Agriculture



Location	High Temperatures						
	OCT 28	OCT 29	OCT 30	OCT 31	NOV 01	NOV 02	NOV 03
Boston	48	55	66	69	67	51	55
Worcester	51	55	70	75	69	53	57
Lawrence	48	54	71	76	70	52	56
Fitchburg	49	54	70	74	67	52	56
North Adams	46	56	69	71	61	47	53
Springfield	52	59	74	78	70	55	59
Chatham	49	54	61	63	63	52	56
Plymouth	49	55	69	75	71	52	57

MEMA Region Updates		
MEMA East	Significant Issues	Local Coordinators are in contact with public safety officials experiencing large wildfires and are prepared to support needs as they arise. MEOC-2 continues deployment to Middleton and is serving as a Unified Command Post at this fire.
	Unmet Needs	None at this time.
MEMA West	Significant Issues	None at this time.
	Unmet Needs	None at this time.

Preparedness and Response Actions

Firefighting

Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR):

- Working on the following brush fires as of 1100 10/31:
 - **Cain Hill:** *Salem/Lynn. 135 acres, 65% contained. Smoldering and creeping fire. No new growth on the fire. Special attention to strengthening perimeter in northeast corner adjacent to residential area. Smoldering interior over most of the fire in heavy surface fuels. Producing light smoke locally.*
 - **Middleton Pond:** *Middleton. 168 acres, 60% contained. Active running fire stopped. Creeping surface fire and heavy smoldering interior. Values at risk on northeast perimeter. A 20 acre controlled burn is in progress this afternoon on the north side of the fire.*
 - **Pappas:** *Canton. 32 acres, 90% contained. In monitoring status with local resources.*
 - **Curry 24:** *Devens. 100 acres, 99% contained. No significant threats to containment reported. DOD Range Control monitoring fire activity.*
 - **Maple Meadow:** *Wilmington. 10 acres, 70% contained. Little to no activity noted.*
 - **Mt. Laurel:** *Holden. 6 acres, 95% contained. Containment lines completed around entire perimeter. Patrolling line.*
 - **Wolcott Hill:** *Milton. Located in Blue Hills Reservation. 2 acres, 100% contained and closed out.*
 - **Traders Way:** *Salem. 15 Acres at 50% containment. Task force and helicopter used on initial attack. Structures in close proximity. Continues to smolder interior producing local smoke conditions. *Containment lines are being strengthened.**
 - **Old Forest Rd:** *North Andover. Located in Boxford State Forest. 5 acres, 30% contained. *Active fire knocked down. Crews returned this morning to continue securing perimeter.**
- DCR Fire staff are assisting local fire departments with monitoring all active incidents.
- DCR Fire Towers are on full alert and providing some good success at detecting new fire starts quickly, resulting in much quicker dispatching to some fires.
- DCR has issued a temporary ban on all open flame and charcoal fires at Massachusetts state parks. The ban is effective immediately and will continue until further notice.

Department of Fire Services (DFS):

- The State Fire Marshal is in contact with fire chiefs across the state to ensure needs are met and coordination with resources is sufficient.
- DFS has deployed drones, UTV/ATVs, rehab units, and staff to support incident commanders, fireground personnel, and impacted communities.

Statewide Fire and EMS Mobilization:

Since Saturday, there have been a total of twelve (12) Fire Mobilization requests for Forestry Task Forces to support wildfire operations in several cities and towns:

- 10/25 Wilmington
 - Forestry Task Force 14A
- 10/26 Wilmington
 - Forestry Task Forces 7C, 14B
- 10/27 Salem
 - Forestry Task Force 6A
- 10/28 Salem
 - Forestry Task Force 13A
- 10/29 Middleton
 - Forestry Task Forces 13A, 6A
- 10/29 Canton
 - Forestry Task Force 2F
- 10/29 Salem
 - Forestry Task Force 14A
- 10/30 Middleton
 - Forestry Task Force 4A, 8A
- 10/30 Salem
 - Forestry Task Force 14B

Many in-district strike teams outside of the Statewide Fire Mobilization Plan have also been requested to augment local efforts.

Massachusetts National Guard (MANG):

The Massachusetts Air National Guard mobilized helicopters to conduct water drop operations in Salem on Sunday, in Middleton on Monday, and again in Salem Tuesday, in coordination with DCR Forestry Wardens and local incident commanders.

No MANG air operations are scheduled today, but crews are on standby today and tomorrow should they be needed.

Massachusetts State Police:

To support wildfire response, the MSP has deployed drones to some fires to provide aerial reconnaissance. Similarly, the MSP Air Wing has flown over some fires to provide aerial reconnaissance.

Public Health

Public Health Resources

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has compiled a range of resources designed to help residents, patients and health professionals navigate the health risks associated with wildfire smoke. All resources are included in the PDF attached to the alert message. We encourage you to share these resources and educate residents on protective measures.

Climate Fact Sheet: Wildfire Smoke (available in 15 languages) – This resource explains who is at higher risk during a wildfire smoke event, including young children, older adults, individuals with respiratory conditions, and others with heightened vulnerability, and provides things people can do

	<p>to stay safe such as talking with their provider about asthma medications, moving outdoor activities indoors, and having a supply of N95 masks available as needed. <u>Climate fact sheet: wildfire smoke events mass.gov</u></p> <p><u>Climate Fact Sheet: Poor Outdoor Air Quality</u> (available in 15 languages) – This resource explains who is at higher risk to poor outdoor air quality including people with asthma, lung, or heart conditions, and provides steps people can take to stay safe such as staying informed about local air quality and reducing outdoor activities on high-pollution days. <u>Climate fact sheet: poor outdoor air quality mass.gov</u></p> <p><u>For Public Officials and Clinicians:</u> We ask that you remain vigilant and responsive to the needs of people who are most vulnerable within your communities. Informing residents about the availability of the resources included in this alert and encouraging steps to reduce smoke exposure can help mitigate health risks.</p>
<p>Environment</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Protection <i>Fine particle levels should average in the Moderate range today.</i></p> <p>MassDEP will not be issuing an air quality alert during the day today.</p> <p><u>https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/dep/massair/web/#/pollution/map/forecast</u></p>
<p>MEMA Operations</p>	
<p>Daily coordination calls are occurring with EOPSS, MEMA, DFS, DCR Forestry, MANG, and impacted fire officials to address unmet needs and ensure a strategic approach to wildfire response.</p> <p>The State Emergency Operations Center is operating at Steady State. MEMA will continue to monitor the situation and will disseminate additional Situational Awareness Statements (SAS) as necessary.</p>	
<p>Stay Informed</p>	
<p>For additional information and updated forecasts, see https://www.weather.gov/box/ (NWS Boston/Norton), and https://www.weather.gov/aly/ (NWS Albany).</p> <p>Use MEMA’s real-time power outage map to stay informed about current power outages in your community/county, and across the state, including information from utility providers http://mema.mapsonline.net/public.html</p>	

Online Resources

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency: www.mass.gov/mema

MEMA's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA>

MEMA on X: <https://x.com/MassEMA>

Federal Emergency Management Agency: <https://www.fema.gov/>

National Weather Service Boston/Norton: <https://www.weather.gov/box/>

National Weather Service Albany NY: <https://www.weather.gov/aly/>

NOAA/NWS Storm Prediction Center: <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/>

Northeast River Forecast Center: <https://www.weather.gov/nerfc/>

National Hurricane Center: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

Mass 211: <https://mass211.org/>

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