



## Wildfires

Wildfires are a serious issue, burning over 5 million acres of land each year in the United States. Most of these fires are caused by people. This means each of us must do our part to understand and prevent wildfires. We can do this by educating ourselves on how wildfires work and how to prevent them.

### How Wildfires Work

- They are commonly started by:
  - ◇ Arson
  - ◇ Campfires
  - ◇ Discarding lit cigarettes
  - ◇ Burning debris improperly
  - ◇ Heat from the sun
  - ◇ Lightning
  - ◇ Sparks from train wheels
- Once a wildfire has begun; fuel, oxygen, and a heat source cause fire to spread rapidly among dry vegetation and trees.
- Depending on fuel, weather, and topography, a wildfire can spread thousands of acres, destroying everything in its path.



### What You Can Do

- Never throw away lit cigarettes, matches, or other smoking materials outdoors. Make sure cigarettes are completely extinguished before you dispose of them.
- During camping trips, practice extreme caution when using lanterns, stoves, and heaters. Make sure these devices have completely cooled before refueling.
- Never leave a fire unattended. Make sure fires are completely extinguished by dousing it in water. Call 911, the local fire department or park service if you see a fire that is unattended or out of control.

### Resources

[OSHA: Wildfires](#) [How Wildfires Work](#)

[Wildfire Safety Tips](#)

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**Don't learn safety by accident**