



NWS Issues Elevated Fire Weather Watch, Series Of Field Fires Break Out On Tuesday Throughout Region

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
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ST. LOUIS - A series of field fires near Alhambra/New Douglas, another in a field on Illinois Route 143 near Hamel and along Interstate-64 near Lebanon raised serious concern about the dry rural conditions around the region. The National Weather Service in St. Louis today issued an Elevated Fire Weather Watch for both Illinois and Missouri.

Another field fire was reported around 3 p.m. Tuesday between Ingham Lane and Lageman Lane near Godfrey.

The New Douglas Volunteer Fire Department sent out a warning today: “Multiple field fires in the area today, it's dry outside! Please use caution.”

A firefighter who battled the Lebanon field fire said the blaze there at Emerland Mound Grange Road off U.S. 50 started in a wheat field and “jumped” to a cornfield. He said there was likely over 100 acres affected by the fire. As many as 4 fire departments were fighting the fire near Lebanon.

This is the warning issued by NWS in St. Louis for the Missouri and Illinois regions:

“Elevated fire weather conditions will exist on Wednesday. There will be strong southwest winds, low relative humidity, warm temperatures, and dry vegetation will

combine to promote elevated fire weather concerns across portions of southwest and Central Missouri.”

NWS Meteorologist Melissa Byrd said the chances of rain are very minimal from now through next Tuesday, which will make the conditions ripe for fires to spread in rural areas. She urges farmers to avoid any burning over the next multiple days.

“The Fire Wind Watch is explained on the National Weather Service page,” Byrd added. “The dry weather conditions and wind speed will be conducive to rapidly spreading growth of uncontrollable fires.”

The combination of lack of ground moisture, combined with dry grass elements and high winds create huge concerns. Meteorologist Byrd said there could be 15-20 mph wind gusts on Wednesday.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)