



Durkee Fire Update for Monday, July 29, 2024

Email: 2024.durkee@firenet.gov Phone: 541-208-4371 (7 a.m. to 7 p.m. PDT)

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/orvad-durkee-fire>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DurkeeFire/>

DURKEE FIRE

Size: 288,690 acres

Start Date: July 17, 2024

Containment: 49%

Personnel: 483

Location: 1 mile west of Durkee, OR

Cause: Lightning

DURKEE FIRE PUBLIC MEETING – MONDAY JULY 29, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. PDT

Today at 6:30 p.m. PDT a public meeting on the Durkee Fire will be held at the Churchill School, 3451 Broadway St., Baker City, OR.

Current Situation

Despite yesterday afternoon's southwest winds, firefighters kept the fire in check. Supported by helicopters on the north side of the fire and in Dark Canyon, firefighters completed control lines and successfully conducted strategic firing operations to strengthen lines. Crews continued to patrol and mop up along the I-84 corridor where the fire has been flaring up occasionally, as well as around the Lime community. Crews also focused on the Shirrtail Creek area where they are still finding heat, and on mopping up north of Bridgeport. In other areas, firefighters continued mopping up remaining heat, especially under junipers and in stump holes, and dropping snags that present significant hazards.

Today, with the support of helicopters performing bucket drops, firefighters will resume strategic firing operations on the north side of the fire to help strengthen containment lines. They also will use masticators and skidgines to help secure containment. Masticators cut up vegetation, helping to create a fire break by removing fuels. Skidgines, a cross between skidders and wildfire engines with much larger water tanks, can operate in rough terrain. Throughout the fire area firefighters will patrol to ensure that containment lines are holding and will continue mopping up remaining heat, specifically in the Shirrtail Creek area, near Bridgeport and into Malheur.

Weather and Fire Behavior

This morning is noticeably more humid but another hot, dry and windy day is expected. Winds will switch in the late morning, coming out of the southwest and possibly pressuring containment lines on the north end of the fire before switching back to northwesterly winds tonight. A weak frontal system will bring a slight chance of isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon, with temperatures in the upper 80s and low 90s and a strong push of northwest Baker Valley winds gusting to 35 mph in the evening and early overnight hours. The chance of thunderstorms increases on Tuesday as an upper level trough moves from west to east. Temperatures are expected to return to triple digits by Thursday.



Evacuations

Yesterday, the Baker County Sheriff's Office reduced evacuation levels to Level 2 (BE SET) for Rye Valley Lane and Mormon Basin Road south to the Baker County line. This area was previously a Level 3. All other evacuation levels remain the same.

The Malheur County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069245917855>) and the Baker County Sheriff's Office (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064434892363>) have issued evacuation orders for multiple areas during the Durkee Fire.-Please stay tuned to their Facebook pages for the latest information.

Residents in Level 3 Evacuations "GO NOW" should leave immediately and not return to their property until evacuation levels are removed. Carry enough supplies to support you and your family for multiple days. A real-time map of fire evacuations is available on the State of Oregon Fire Dashboard (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/instant/portfolio/index.html?appid=22d04c007866419c91ccf00d097526c8>).

Closures:

- The Baker County Sheriff's Office has closed **Burnt River Canyon Road** to non-local, non-emergency traffic.
- **I-84 and other highways:** Please go to tripcheck.com for current road closures as the situation is dynamic and subject to change.
- A **burn ban** is currently in effect for all of Malheur County (<https://www.malheurco.org/category/public-notices>), and all Bureau of Land Management lands in Malheur and Baker counties.
- A **Temporary Flight Restriction** remains in effect over the Durkee Fire (https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_6061.html). Please remember, if you fly we can't! If a drone or other aircraft enters the air space, all firefighting aircraft will be grounded.

Additional Resources:

- For current air quality information, visit fire.airnow.gov.
- Weather and fire behavior could impact transportation, power transmission, cell service and other utilities. Monitor IdahoPower.com for information.