



Durkee Fire Update for Thursday, August 1, 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: 293,882 acres

Containment: 58%

Location: 1 mile west of Durkee, OR

Start Date: July 17, 2024

Personnel: 475

Cause: Lightning

DURKEE FIRE PUBLIC MEETING – FRIDAY AUGUST 2, 2024, at 6 p.m. PDT

On Friday August 2 at 6 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

Please drive carefully near firefighters and equipment in the fire area to allow them to work safely.

Yesterday's weather was warmer and drier than expected causing smoke and smoldering in interior pockets of unburned fuels. Firefighters responded to a flareup southeast of Stump Spring Butte and east of Chicken Peak. This small area was well inside containment lines. Despite the conditions, firefighters did not detect much heat near the edges of the fire but were prepared to respond if necessary. On the north side of the fire, crews continued mopping up after previous strategic firing operations, finding some heat as temperatures rose and fuels dried out. Firefighters cold trailed northwest of Clarksville and up Shirttail Creek to Rye Valley where they are still finding heat under junipers. Crews continued removing excess structure protection equipment where it is no longer needed. In the I-84 corridor and on the west and south side of the fire, firefighters patrolled and mopped up, looking closely for heat in the riparian areas where green fuels can ignite and spread fire rapidly. Aviation resources again supported the nearby Badlands Complex and Falls Fire.

Crews began to plan for suppression repair. This involves returning firelines and other areas disturbed by wildfire suppression operations to as natural a state as is practical to minimize erosion.

Today, increased fire activity is expected as the warming and drying trend continues. Firefighters will remain vigilant for flareups of unburned pockets of fuel in the interior. An initial attack contingency crew is available for quick response. Crews will patrol and monitor the edges of the fire, mopping up hotspots to strengthen containment lines and cold trailing to ensure no heat remains. Aircraft will be available to respond as needed and for a potential reconnaissance flight on the northwest side of the fire. Marathon Petroleum Corporation will be flying a survey mission to check for damage on their pipeline on the east side of the fire.

Weather and Fire Behavior

The dramatic drop in relative humidity will continue today. Minimum relative humidity is expected to be 17-20% with conditions becoming increasingly unstable in the afternoon. Temperatures will climb to around 102 degrees, with a rapid warmup to 107 degrees by Friday. Overnight temperatures will steadily increase with lows of 70-74 degrees expected. An Excessive Heat Warning is in effect for Friday and Saturday. Dry thunderstorms are possible Saturday night into Sunday and potentially Monday, producing wind and lightning with little rain.



Evacuations

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 continue to be vigilant and stay tuned to their Facebook pages for the latest information. Weather patterns and fire activity may lead to an increase in evacuation levels.

Residents in Level 3 Evacuations "GO NOW" should leave immediately and not return to their property until evacuation levels are lowered. 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. More information is available at 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.
- Post-fire resources for eastern Oregon livestock and agricultural producers are available. For immediate assistance associated with livestock, forage, and crop losses contact your county's USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. Learn more about these and other disaster relief programs at www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/wildfire and contact your FSA Service Center.
- For technical expertise regarding livestock, post-fire rehabilitation and land management, call Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center at (541) 573-8900.
- Questions related to agriculture and natural resources, family and community health, and more may be directed to the OSU Extension Service office in your county (<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us>).
- If you don't have access to a computer and/or internet connection, Extension offices house Ag Disaster Relief Resource Computers, which are available to producers to access federal/state relief programs.
- Oregon Wildfire Response & Recovery website (wildfire.oregon.gov/recovery) provides guidance on topics including wildfire insurance, filing a homeowners claim after the fire, returning to a home that survived a fire, replacing lost or missing documents and next steps for people whose homes or businesses burned.
- For longer term management needs, contact the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) field office in your county to explore current funding/technical support available and inform future program offerings in your county. Go to www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/oregon/whats-available-in-my-county.