



# NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER

3833 South Development Avenue  
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## PL-5 Key Messages June 30, 2008



- The national Preparedness Level is set by the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group, or NMAC. Preparedness Levels range from 1 to 5, with one indicating minimal fire activity and five representing major fires in several geographic areas that have the potential to exhaust agency fire resources.



- NMAC elevated the current level to five due to several factors:
  - The current fire activity, particularly in California.
  - The expected increase in fire activity elsewhere in the nation, particularly in the Great Basin, Northwest and Rocky Mountains.
  - The expectation that many of the current fires in Northern California will continue to burn well into the summer.
  - The heavy commitment of crews and resources to California, which is stretching firefighting agencies' capabilities.
  - The unprecedented early start to the fire season in California.
  - Concern about firefighter fatigue, with the most difficult part of the fire season likely yet to come.
  - President Bush declared a state of emergency for seven counties in central and northern California.



- This is the second earliest date since 1990 that PL-5 has been reached. Only on June 21, 2002, was PL-5 reached earlier.



- The preparedness level has increased rapidly over the last two weeks, indicating how quickly the seriousness of the fire season in the United States has grown. The preparedness level was 2 on June 21, went to three 3 on June 22, and was elevated to 4 on June 25.



- As the season intensifies, it's a reminder to the public to be careful with and around fire, and for those who own homes in fire-prone areas, to take the few simple steps needed to help their property to become more defensible.



- Resources are stretched, but the top priorities of firefighters remain to protect life, property and critical natural resources. Each fire manager has available a full range of options, from monitoring fires that are ecologically beneficial to aggressive suppression tactics.