

# Climate Fires

## Trump Denies Reality And Ignores People Dying From Climate Fires In Blue States

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### QUICK FACTS

- As of Sunday, September 14, there were 87 active large fires that have burned [4.6 million acres](#) across several western states and have [killed at least 35](#) people while Trump has [remained silent](#) for weeks.
- Climate change is driving the extreme wildfires we're seeing this year. Just last month, a Stanford researcher [published a paper](#) linking California's changing climate, including hotter temperatures and decreased precipitation to increased wildfires. *See below for more research on the links between climate change and fires.*
- Trump called climate change a "[hoax](#)" and continues to deny the science and lie about the impacts of climate change.
- The 2017, 2018, and 2019 western wildfire seasons caused [a combined \\$48 billion in damage and 163 deaths](#). The human costs are also compounded by exposure to [toxic air pollution](#) from wildfire smoke.
- The number of acres that has already burned each season has [doubled since 1984](#).

## **DIG DEEPER**

### **Happening Now:**

- As of Sunday, September 14, there were 87 active large fires across the west.
  - The fires that are still active have burned [4.6 million acres](#).
  - More than [6 million acres have burned](#) in total during the 2020 fire season so far.
- As of Monday morning (9/14), western wildfires have [killed at least 35](#).
- Residents near 39 large fires in California, Oregon, Washington and Colorado [remain under evacuation orders](#).
- Because of the fires, [four of the world's 10 most polluted cities are in the West](#): Portland, Oregon ranks #1, Seattle is #3, San Francisco is #6 and Los Angeles ranks #8.
- There are [34 active fires](#) across Oregon, [13 are considered large](#), and [one million acres have burned](#) (twice the yearly average).
- In California, over 3.3 million acres have burned and currently, there are [44 active fires](#) with [25 designated as large](#). The August Complex fire is only 28% contained and has already burned nearly 900,000 acres alone.
- Washington currently has [16 large fires](#) burning that have already scorched over 675,000 acres and has Seattle under a ["super-massive"](#) cloud of smoke.

### **This Is Happening Because Of Climate Change:**

- Climate change is making conditions [hotter and drier](#), exacerbating fire season and magnifying the devastating impacts of wildfires year after year.
- The [2018 National Climate Assessment](#) found "the area burned by wildfire from 1984 to 2015 was twice what would have burned had climate change not occurred."
- A [NASA scientist](#) looking at 20 years of satellite data found "where warming and drying climate had increased the risk of fires, we've seen an increase in burning."

- Just last month, a Stanford researcher [published a paper](#) linking California's changing climate, including hotter temperatures and decreased precipitation to increased wildfires.
- Northern California summers are [2.5 degrees warmer](#) than they were in the 1970s and are expected to heat up another 4.5 degrees by the end of the century.
- As Park Williams, a bioclimatologist at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, [explains](#) "The climate-change connection is straightforward: Warmer temperatures dry out fuels. In areas with abundant and very dry fuels, all you need is a spark,"
- A study published in 2015 found that climate change caused an [18.7% increase](#) in average fire season length and doubled the area of the globe that is at risk for wildfires from 1979 to 2013.

#### **Trump Denies the Climate Crisis:**

- Trump has a long history of calling climate change a "[hoax](#)."
- In 2018, thirteen different government agencies [published a report](#) that warned of climate change's impacts, including the increasing risks of wildfires, yet Trump said "[I don't believe it](#)."
- Trump has continued to lie about these wildfires, blaming California's forest management and stating that these western states needed to "[clean](#)" [their forest floors](#).
  - [Trump's claims have been de-bunked](#) repeatedly by fact checkers when he made these statements in previous wildfire seasons.

#### **It Hurts Real People:**

- The 2017, 2018, and 2019 western wildfire seasons caused [a combined \\$48 billion in damage and 163 deaths](#).
- [According to the NOAA](#), wildfires emit "substantial amounts" of toxic air pollutants.
- The [American Lung Association warns](#) pollution in wildfire smoke "triggers asthma attacks, heart attacks and strokes—and can kill.

#### **It's Getting Worse:**

**CLIMATE  
POWER  
2020**

- The number of acres that has already burned each season has [doubled since 1984](#).
- The federal government's [cost for fighting wildfires](#) has grown over 10 times since 1985.
- [Six of the largest 20 wildfires](#) in California's history have happened in late August and early September of 2020.
- According to a study published by Earth's Future in 2019, California wildfires have increase in size eightfold, burning an area nearly [500% bigger than in the 1970s](#).