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Drought Increases Wildfire Danger

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - Oklahoma State Forester George L. Geissler says the deepening drought and persistent 100-degree temperatures are increasing the danger of wildfires across the state.

He says the entire state is experiencing at least a moderate drought. Geissler says high temperatures coupled with lack of rain are causing trees and crops to dry to critical levels and become fuel for wildfires.

Oklahoma Emergency Management Director Albert Ashwood says as many as 10 wildfires are reported to authorities each day. A wildfire that started on July 25 in southwestern Oklahoma burned about 30,000 acres before it was finally contained.

Meteorologist Marc Austin of the National Weather Service in Norman says rainfall since the beginning of June is 6 inches below normal and no storm systems are in the forecast.

Associated Press