



Fire Danger Notice 15 of 2018
Issue date: 11 July 2018 @ 0900hrs

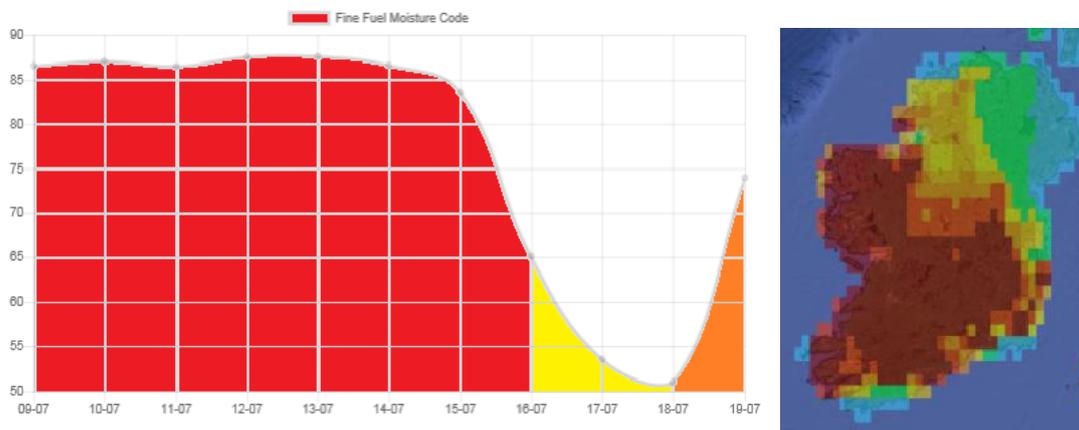
Forest Fire Danger Rating



Condition RED – Extreme Fire Risk

Warning Effective From 0900hrs 11/07/2018
Effective Period Expires 1200hrs 16/07/2018

Arising from the effects of prolonged high pressure weather systems, and Drought conditions, an extreme fire risk is deemed to exist in all areas where hazardous fuels exist. This risk is further compounded by high ignitions risks associated with increased human activities on all high risk land types during the current drought spell.



Fire Weather Data Courtesy of European Commission Copernicus System, European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting and Met Eireann.

DAFM advise at this point that all outdoor use of fires, barbeques and other open ignition sources be avoided on forest lands, public amenities and in other high risk areas until further notice. Extreme caution is again advised with respect to hay making and the use of machinery and other agricultural activity that may also present a risk of fire in dry vegetation in current conditions. Significant fire activity has taken place on bog, forest and urban parklands in recent days and an increased vigilance by land managers and landowners is advised. Landowners are reminded that it is an offence to burn vegetation growing on uncultivated lands between March 1st and August 31st.

Pending a significant change in meteorological conditions this risk condition will remain in place until 1200hrs on Monday, July 16th, 2018, and will be reviewed again at that point.

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Fire Weather Index Values

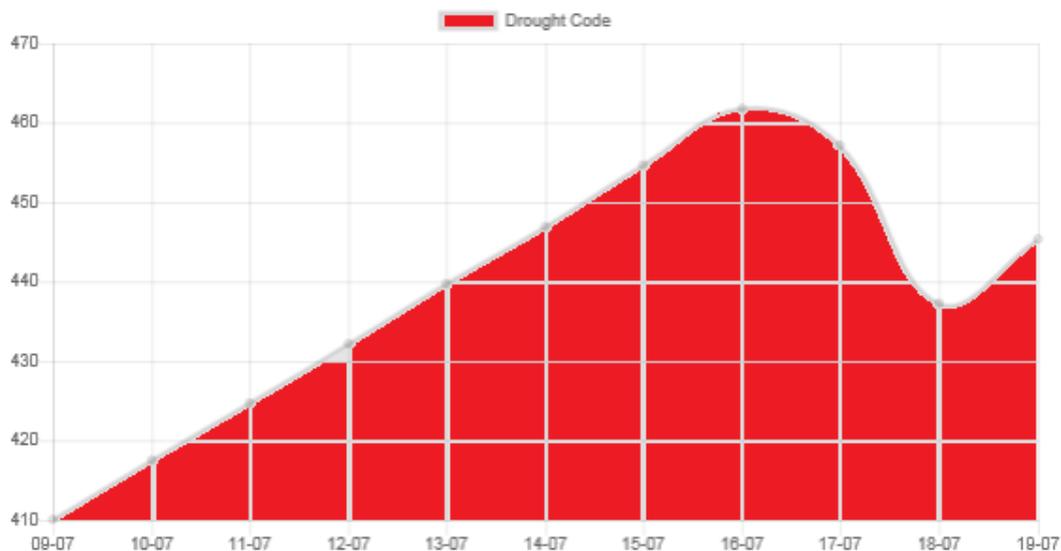
Fine Fuel Moisture Code value (FFMC) has remained above **85** in east Leinster and is expected to remain above this key threshold through the week, indicating ready flammability and ease of ignition in dead upland vegetation as the week progresses. Forecast light rain in some areas may reduce this value temporarily but effects of this will be very short term.

An actual Drought Condition is now in effect, with no reported rain in many stations for over 18 successive days. Soil Moisture deficits are now above **90** in several areas, indicating reduced water availability to vegetation on all soil types, particularly shallow rooting vegetation, and lower live fuel moisture contents in key high fire risk vegetation types. These deficits and effects are likely to be significantly higher on peat soils and on well-drained soil types. Current Soil Moisture Deficits can be expected to continue to increase steadily under further prolonged drought conditions, and advanced grass curing is now evident in many areas as a consequence of this.

Drought Code (DC) is at a highly elevated level above **410** and increasing daily indicating difficult and extensive mop up requirements of smouldering material, increased availability of larger diameter fuels, and an elevated risk of sub-surface fires in peats and organic soil layers. Increased attention and effort will be required to achieve complete mop-up of smouldering material following fires on this basis.

Projected **Initial Spread Index (ISI)** values have reduced slightly in response to cooler air temperatures, are now in the Moderate range for Irish conditions at **4+**, but still indicate a **potential for fire spread in shrub fuel types**, particularly where localised wind conditions permit. However a reduction in ISI values is offset by concurrent increases in **Build Up Index (BUI)** values, which relate to the availability of larger diameter materials such as logs as fuels. Values above 60 are considered extreme and at this point indicated value is now in excess of **110**. This value is expected to steadily increase during the lifespan of this notice.

Effects of tropical low pressure system Storm “Chris” may induce significant wind speeds in advance of light rainfall, which could have an adverse influence on fire behaviour. Forecast wind speeds may exceed 30km/h in some western areas. Low wind speed values have had a moderating effect on fire behaviour over the last 14 days, but this effect is now increasingly offset by very low fuel moisture levels. Pending prolonged, significant rainfall this situation is not expected to improve. Extreme caution is warranted where wind speeds exceed 30km/h.



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Advisory

Under extreme Fire Risk Conditions any ignition source in hazardous fuels may give rise to rapid and unpredictable wildfire development and spread, particularly in dead grasses, and in shrub fuels like gorse and heather. Under these conditions, upland fires can be expected to cover extensive areas and pose extreme difficulties to suppression efforts and may potentially give rise to Major Emergency scenarios.

The issue of Condition Red Extreme fire risk warnings is a comparatively rare event and implies that recipients should take immediate action to protect resources and property. Such action may involve the mobilisation, assembly and repositioning of resources such as water tankers, machinery, personnel and air support in high risk areas.

Contracted Air Support should now be notified for immediate readiness when required.

Preliminary notification of Aid to Civil Power / Aid to Civil Authority requests by relevant authorities may also be warranted where extreme conditions are deemed likely to exist, and where emergency response requirements may be likely to exceed the capabilities of Civil Authorities.

Forest owners / managers, other land managers, landowners and local authorities should implement fire patrols to exclude all fire activity from the landscape and enforce relevant fire protection legislation for the duration of this notice.

Rural residents should also implement a high degree of vigilance, and check on elderly or other vulnerable neighbours and assist with preparation and reassurance, and evacuation if this is deemed necessary by the Local Authorities.

Advice to the General Public/Forest Visitors

Members of the public and visitors to recreational areas should cooperate with all requests regarding fire safety, obey all relevant bye-laws and be considerate in parking vehicles so as not to impede access by emergency vehicles.

Where fire outbreaks occur at or near recreational areas the following actions should be taken by visitors in the interests of safety.

1. Do not light fires in and around forests or open land.
2. Do not attempt to intervene or fight fires under any circumstances.
3. Gather all family/group members and move to a safe fuel-free location such as a car park, upwind of the fire.
4. Telephone Fire and Rescue Services via 112 and report the fire and its location.
5. Evacuate if instructed to do so, and cooperate with all Emergency Service Instructions.

Further information on fire management and wildfire protection is available at

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/firemanagement/>

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