



## Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Situational Awareness Statement # 7

Subject: Statewide Brushfire Operations Since 10/25  
Date/Time: 11/04/2024 3:00 PM

Incident or Event Overview
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Situation</b></p> <p><i>Fire activity continues throughout the Commonwealth as weather conditions continue to favor wildfire development. As of 1700 yesterday, the total number of active fires in the Commonwealth <b>dropped from 12 to 7</b>.</i></p> <p><i>Governor Healey issued a <a href="#">press release</a> this morning urging residents to refrain from any outdoor activities that involve open flames, sparks and embers, or other heat sources.</i></p> <p><i>The State Fire Marshal and the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts have issued a recommendation to local fire chiefs to deny any fire-related permit requests and collaborate with local officials to prohibit any recreational fire activity. Fire chiefs have the authority to prohibit the use of open flames and other ignition sources in hazardous conditions, such as extreme drought or red-flag conditions, under Section 10.10.2 of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code.</i></p> <p><i>Wildfire activity continued yesterday with increased efforts to increase security and containment on all active fires. Poor overnight ventilation and inversion conditions resulted in moderate to heavy smoke impacts on Interstate 91 in Northampton from the Fitzgerald Fire. Smoke from the Fitzgerald and Moose Meadow Fires combined and drifted down valley into Connecticut resulting in numerous 911 calls for smoke investigation in numerous towns. Good progress was made on most of the large active fires, as winds cooperated to remain light in most areas.</i></p> <p><i>Mass National Guard provided 1 helicopter in support of the Fitzgerald Fire in Northampton and was reassigned to the Moose Meadow Fire in Montgomery yesterday afternoon as that fire became more active with growth to the southeast closer to residential homes. The dropping of fall foliage onto burn areas continues to challenge containment efforts on most fires. A Mass National Guard helicopter has been assigned to the Montgomery Fire today, 11/4, to continue supporting efforts there.</i></p> <p><b>Weather Update:</b></p> <p><i>Mostly dry weather is expected throughout much of this week which will continue to support brushfire development. High pressure will begin to shift offshore today which will allow well above normal temperatures to return Tuesday and Wednesday under a gusty southerly wind of 10-15 with gusts up to 30 mph. Humidity levels increase to the 60-75% range Tuesday and 50-60% Wednesday.</i></p>

*Temperatures gradually decrease Thursday into the weekend thanks to a cooler and drier airmass returning to the region. In addition to the cooler temperatures, humidity values will lower once again into a general 35-50% range Thursday through Saturday.*

*A low-pressure system may deliver some much-needed rainfall Sunday into next Monday. Additional opportunities for rainfall look promising towards mid-November.*

#### **Hazard Impacts/Potential Impacts**

- Increased smoke impacts on residential homes and roadways.
- Loss of forest stock.
- Obstruction of roadways.
- Damage to buildings and infrastructure in burn areas.

#### **Weather Forecast Overview**

##### **Watches, Warnings or Advisories for Massachusetts**

*Last updated at 2:45 PM on 11/4/2024*

#### **Special Weather Statement (Fire Weather)**

*11/3/2024 19:00 EST through 11/4/2024 19:00 EST*

Northern Berkshire, MA; Southern Berkshire, MA

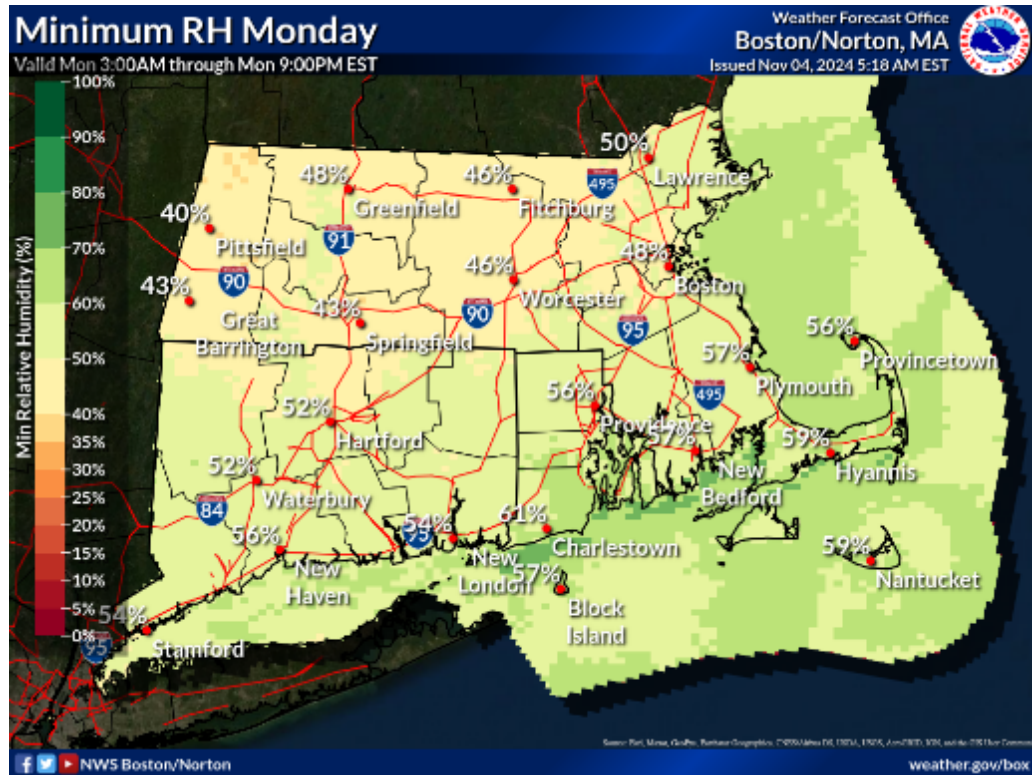
#### **Special Weather Statement (Fire Weather)**

*11/3/2024 17:58 EST through 11/4/2024 18:00 EST*

Western Franklin, MA; Eastern Franklin, MA; Northern Worcester, MA; Central Middlesex County, MA; Western Essex, MA; Eastern Essex, MA; Western Hampshire, MA; Western Hampden, MA; Eastern Hampshire, MA; Eastern Hampden, MA; Southern Worcester, MA; Western Norfolk, MA; Southeast Middlesex, MA; Suffolk, MA; Eastern Norfolk, MA; Northern Bristol, MA; Western Plymouth, MA; Eastern Plymouth, MA; Southern Bristol, MA; Southern Plymouth, MA; Barnstable, MA; Dukes, MA; Nantucket, MA; Northwest Middlesex County, MA

More information available at <https://alerts.weather.gov/search?area=MA>

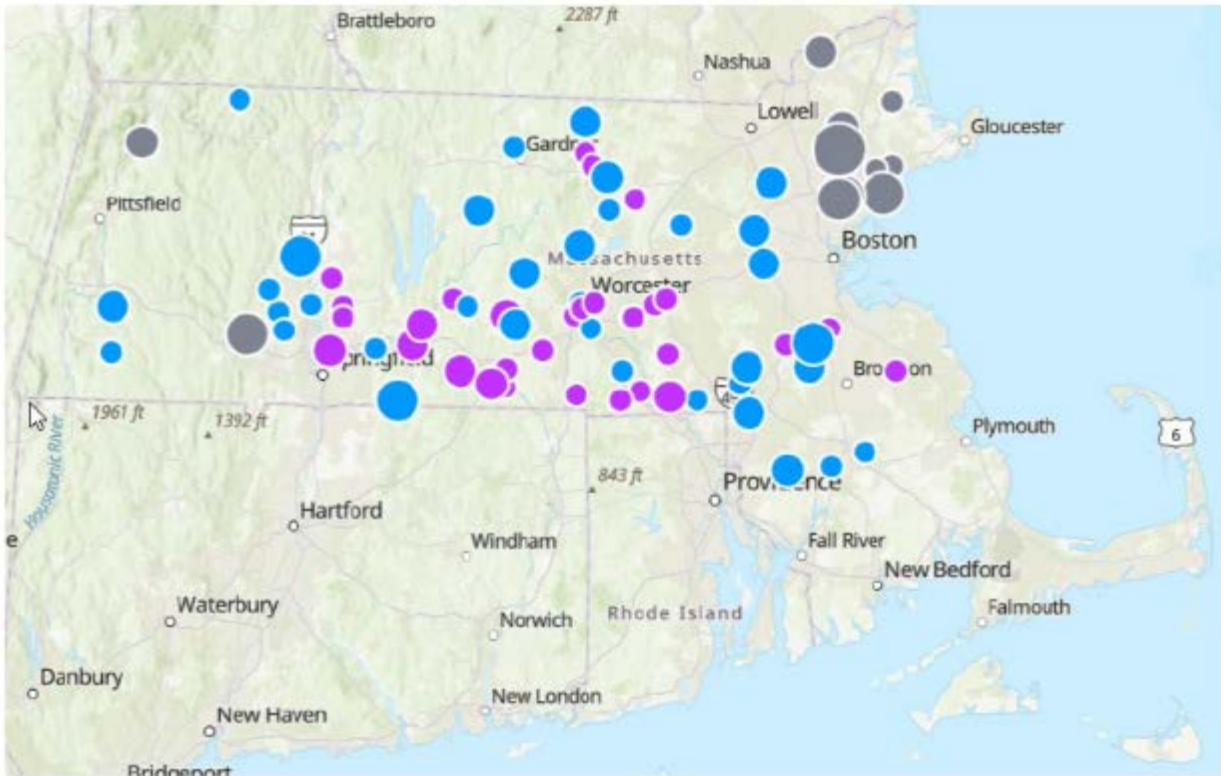
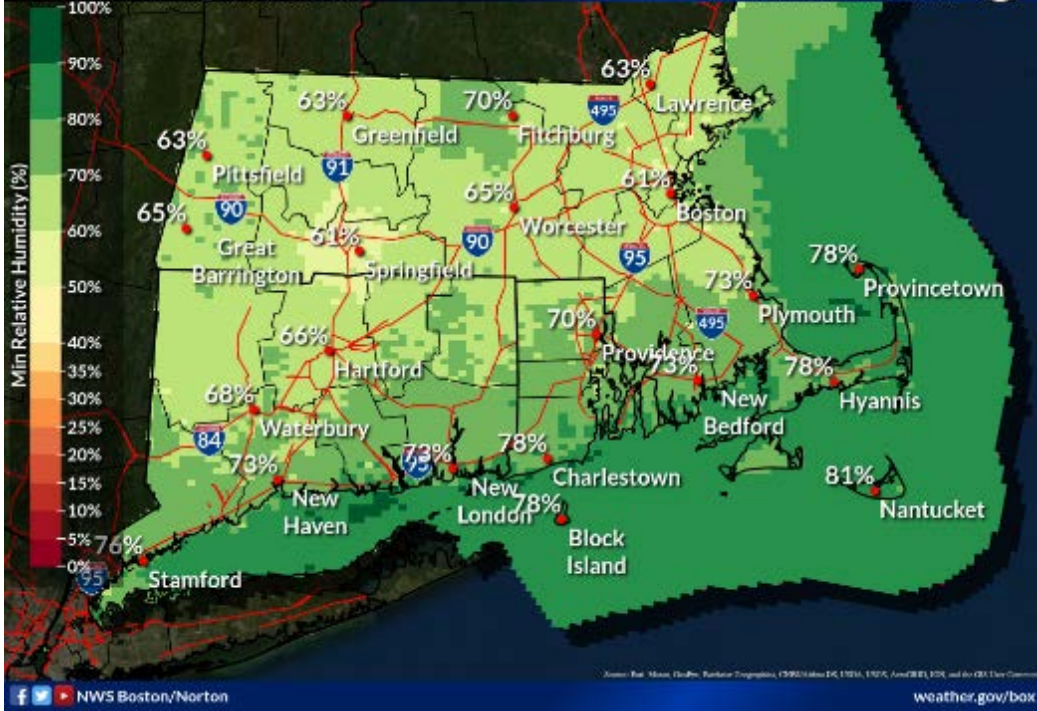
Weather Graphics



# Minimum RH Tuesday

Valid Tue 3:00AM through Tue 9:00PM EST

Weather Forecast Office  
Boston/Norton, MA  
Issued Nov 04, 2024 5:18 AM EST



7 Day Wildfire Activity Since October 27th

Areas	High Temperatures						
<b>Boston</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	51	66	69	60	58	52	56
<b>Worcester</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	50	68	73	60	57	51	57
<b>Lawrence</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	50	69	74	60	58	51	57
<b>Fitchburg</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	48	67	72	58	56	50	56
<b>North Adams</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	48	66	67	53	52	45	53
<b>Springfield</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	53	70	75	61	59	54	59
<b>Chatham</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	54	62	62	58	57	52	57
<b>Plymouth</b>	NOV 04	NOV 05	NOV 06	NOV 07	NOV 08	NOV 09	NOV 10
	52	68	73	63	59	52	58

Massachusetts

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Map released: Thurs. October 31, 2024

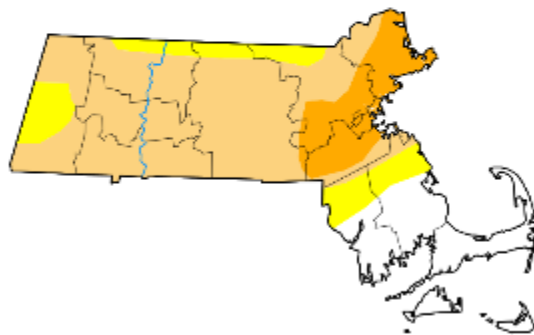
Data valid: October 29, 2024 at 8 a.m. EDT

**Intensity**

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

**Authors**

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):  
[Brian Fuchs](#), National Drought Mitigation Center  
 Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):  
[Richard Heim](#), NOAA/NCEI



**FIRE STATISTICS:**

<b>YTD STATE TOTALS:</b>	<b>793 FIRES</b>	<b>1,347 ACRES BURNED</b>
<b>OCTOBER TOTALS:</b>	<b>203 FIRES</b>	<b>623 ACRES BURNED</b>
<b>NOVEMBER TOTALS:</b>	<b>30 FIRES</b>	<b>180 ACRES BURNED</b>
<b>7 DAY TOTALS:</b>	<b>87 FIRES</b>	<b>483 ACRES BURNED</b>
<b>24 HR:</b>	<b>4 FIRES</b>	<b>3 ACRES BURNED (Est.)</b>

*Fire Statistics As of 11/03/2024*



*MA National Guard Air Operations, Monson, MA*



*MA National Guard Air Operations, Northampton, MA*

MEMA Region Updates		
MEMA East	Significant Issues	Local Coordinators are in contact with public safety officials experiencing large wildfires and are prepared to support needs as they arise.  MEOC-2 continues deployment to Middleton and is serving as a Unified Command Post at this fire.
	Unmet Needs	None at this time.
MEMA West	Significant Issues	Local Coordinators are in contact with public safety officials experiencing large wildfires and are prepared to support needs as they arise.  <i>A Local Coordinator continues to support on scene operations in Monson and Montgomery today.</i>
	Unmet Needs	None at this time.

Preparedness and Response Actions	
Firefighting	<p><b>Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working on the following brush fires as of <i>1700 11/03</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Cain Hill:</b> Salem/Lynn. Holding at 140 acres and 50% containment. <i>Special attention to strengthening perimeter in northeast corner adjacent to residential area. Smoldering interior over most of the fire due to heavy surface fuel. Producing light smoke in local region.</i></li> <li>○ <b>Middleton Pond:</b> Middleton. Fire now at 188 acres and increased to 70% containment. <i>DCR Fire crews plumbed sprinkler system along Division A to increase protection of homes immediately adjacent to the fire. Continued creeping and surface fire and moderate to heavy smoldering interior. State and local crews engaged.</i></li> <li>○ <b>Pappas:</b> Canton. 32 acres at 80% containment. Local units continue patrol and mop-up. Low smoldering in the interior. <i>Local FD monitoring.</i></li> <li>○ <b>Wolcott Hill:</b> Milton, Blue Hills Reservation. <i>Fire broke out of containment during yesterday's wind event. DCR and National Guard crews, supported by a Mass National Guard helicopter delivered over 30,000 gals of water and aggressively mopped up the entire fire today. Now 4 acres and increased to 70% containment. Very difficult access and terrain. State and Local crews engaged.</i></li> <li>○ <b>Traders Way:</b> Salem. 15 acres at 50% containment. <i>Taskforce and helicopter used on initial attack. Structures in close proximity. Continues to smolder in the interior, producing local smoke conditions. Containment lines are being strengthened. No new activity. Local FD monitoring.</i></li> <li>○ <b>Old Forest Road:</b> North Andover, Boxford State Forest. 5 acres, 50% containment. Crews continue to strengthen containment lines. No new activity.</li> <li>○ <b>Bradway:</b> Monson, MA. Started 10/31 in the evening. <i>Crews made great progress in securing perimeter today with</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

assistance of helicopter operations, forestry task forces and DCR Fire crews. Mapped at 44 acres, 90% Contained. Heightened dead tree snag issues throughout the burn area. State and local crews engaged.

- **Castle Rock:** Saugus, Breakheart State Reservation. State and local crew actively engaged and around the fire. Fire anchored to existing hardpacked trails and roads. 22 acres mapped, 80% contained.
- **Pond South:** Middleton MA, 1 mile south of ongoing Middleton Pond fire on south shore of the pond. Estimated at 4 acres, 60% contained. State and local crews around the fire.
- **Fitzgerald (NEW FIRE):** Northampton. Remote fire in conservation area off Coles Meadow Rd. Difficult access. *Fire is burning against a wetland marsh with dry shrub and grass fuels. Helicopter air operations were very effective to improve perimeter control across most of the fire. Heavy smoldering interior. Currently 55 Acres, 85% Contained. State and local crews around the fire.*
- **Moose Meadow (NEW FIRE):** Montgomery, MA, located off Pritcher Rd in the watershed area, the fire started overnight from an abandoned campfire along the reservoir and spread moderately toward Pritcher Rd. *Growth to the southeast this afternoon. Helicopter air operations used to slow rates of spread toward structures. Currently mapped at 60 acres and 60% contained. More accurate mapping planned for tomorrow operations*
- **Howe (NEW FIRE):** Spencer, MA. in Spencer State Forest. Fire is 9 acres and 80% contained. Burning deep into organic soils. Many resources from local towns with DCR Fire made good progress.

- DCR fire staff are assisting local fire departments with monitoring all active incidents.
- DCR fire towers on full alert and successfully detecting new fires, resulting in faster dispatching to fires.
- DCR has issued a temporary ban on all open flame and charcoal fires at Massachusetts state parks. The ban is effective immediately and will continue until further notice.

**Department of Fire Services (DFS):**

- The State Fire Marshal is in contact with fire chiefs across the state to ensure needs are met and coordination with resources is sufficient.
- DFS has deployed drones, UTV/ATVs, rehab units, and staff to support incident commanders, fireground personnel, and impacted communities.
- *DFS is working with MassDOT to display public messaging on Variable Message Boards on state highways regarding current fire conditions and restricting outside burning.*



**Statewide Fire/EMS Mobilization:**

Since 10/25, there have been a total of (14) fire mobilization requests for Forestry Task Forces in support of wildfire operations:

- 10/25 Wilmington
  - Forestry Task Force 14A
- 10/26 Wilmington
  - Forestry Task Forces 7C, 14B
- 10/27 Salem
  - Forestry Task Force 6A
- 10/28 Salem
  - Forestry Task Force 13A
- 10/29 Middleton
  - Forestry Task Forces 13A, 6A
- 10/29 Canton
  - Forestry Task Force 2F
- 10/29 Salem
  - Forestry Task Force 14A
- 10/30 Middleton
  - Forestry Task Force 4A, 8A
- 10/30 Salem
  - Forestry Task Force 14B
- 11/1 Monson
  - Structural Task Force 7A
  - Forestry Hand Crew 9
- 11/02 Monson
  - Forestry Task Force 12A
  - Structural Tender Task Force 9A
- 11/02 Middleton
  - Forestry Task Force 2D
- 11/3 Monson
  - Forestry Task Force 7B
- 11/4 Monson
  - Forestry Task Force 8D

Many in-district strike teams have been requested to augment local efforts outside the Statewide Fire Mobilization Plan.

**Massachusetts National Guard (MANG)**

*MANG air ops will support Montgomery today in coordination with DCR Forestry and local incident commanders.*

**Massachusetts State Police (MSP)**

*MSP continues to support wildfire response. MSP continues to deploy drones to provide aerial live feeds and thermal imaging for situational awareness.*

- *MSP drones continue to assist in Middleton with aerial recon and thermal imaging.*
- *The Air Wing was requested and responded to the fires in Northampton to provide aerial surveillance for situational awareness and planning purposes.*

<p><b>Health and Medical</b></p>	<p><b>Public Health Resources</b></p> <p>The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has compiled a range of resources designed to help residents, patients, and health professionals navigate the health risks associated with wildfire smoke. All resources are included in the PDF attached to the alert message. We encourage you to share these resources and educate residents on protective measures.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Climate Fact Sheet: Wildfire Smoke</a></u> (available in 15 languages) – This resource explains who is at higher risk during a wildfire smoke event, including young children, older adults, individuals with respiratory conditions, and others with heightened vulnerability, and provides things people can do to stay safe such as talking with their provider about asthma medications, moving outdoor activities indoors, and having a supply of N95 masks available as needed.  <u><a href="#">Climate fact sheet: wildfire smoke events   mass.gov</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Climate Fact Sheet: Poor Outdoor Air Quality</a></u> (available in 15 languages) – This resource explains who is at higher risk to poor outdoor air quality including people with asthma, lung, or heart conditions, and provides steps people can take to stay safe such as staying informed about local air quality and reducing outdoor activities on high-pollution days.  <u><a href="#">Climate fact sheet: poor outdoor air quality   mass.gov</a></u></p> <p>For Public Officials and Clinicians: We ask that you remain vigilant and responsive to the needs of people who are most vulnerable within your communities. Informing residents about the availability of the resources included in this alert and encouraging steps to reduce smoke exposure can help mitigate health risks.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection</b></p>	<p><b>Department of Environmental Protection:</b></p> <p><i><a href="#">Fine particle levels should average in the Good to low-Moderate range on Monday. Levels may be elevated locally near any brush fires.</a></i></p> <p>Open burning is prohibited.</p> <p><u><a href="https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/dep/massair/web/#/pollution/map/forecast">https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/dep/massair/web/#/pollution/map/forecast</a></u></p>

<p align="center"><b>MEMA Operations</b></p>	
<p>Daily coordination calls are occurring with EOPSS, MEMA, DFS, DCR Forestry, MANG, and impacted area fire officials to address unmet needs and ensure a strategic approach to brushfire response.</p> <p><i><a href="#">At the request of the State Fire Marshal, MEMA conducted proactive outreach to CSX and Pan Am railroads, asking them to pause any rail grinding or other rail work that could cause sparks through at least Sunday in Massachusetts, to prevent this cause of wildfires.</a></i></p>	

The State Emergency Operations Center is operating at Steady State. MEMA will continue to monitor the situation and will disseminate additional Situational Awareness Statements (SAS) tomorrow at 1500.

#### Safety Tips for Specific Threats and Hazards

- Drought Safety Tips <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-safety-tips>
- Wildfire Safety Tips <https://www.ready.gov/wildfires>

#### Stay Informed

For additional information and updated forecasts, see <https://www.weather.gov/box/> (NWS Boston/Norton), and <https://www.weather.gov/aly/> (NWS Albany).

Use MEMA's real-time power outage map to stay informed about current power outages in your community/county, and across the state, including information from utility providers <http://mema.maponline.net/public.html>

#### Online Resources

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema)  
MEMA's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsEMA>  
MEMA on X: <https://x.com/MassEMA>  
Federal Emergency Management Agency: <https://www.fema.gov/>  
National Weather Service Boston/Norton: <https://www.weather.gov/box/>  
National Weather Service Albany NY: <https://www.weather.gov/aly/>  
NOAA/NWS Storm Prediction Center: <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/>  
Northeast River Forecast Center: <https://www.weather.gov/nerfc/>  
National Hurricane Center: <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>  
Mass 211: <https://mass211.org/>

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