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**For Immediate Release** **Contact:**

[Date] [Local PR Person]

 [Phone #]

**Fire Fighters Say Wildfires Are Increasing and Expanding**

**[City, State]** – The number of large wildfires in North America has increased four-fold, with 330,000 wildfires recorded each year. More than 46 million homes in 70,000 communities are located in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas.

“There’s no such thing as a wildfire season anymore,” says [Name, Title and Organization]. “Wildfires are occurring with greater frequency near and within urban settings across North America as a warming climate and expanded development continue to encroach on wilderness areas. It is vital that everyone in the community be prepared, aware of their surroundings and ready to act early in the event of a wildfire.”

“Planning ahead for these fires can really help in reducing the total number of wildfires and their potential impact,” says [last name]. “To start, it’s important to create a 30- to 100-foot safety zone around your home and locate outside water sources that can help put out a fire.”

[Name of Organization]recommends the following prevention tips:

**Tips for Preventing a Wildfire**

* Contact 9-1-1, your local fire department or the park service if you notice an unattended or out-of-control fire.
* Never leave a campfire unattended. Completely extinguish the fire—by dousing it with water and stirring the ashes until cold—before sleeping or leaving the campsite.
* When camping, take care when using and fueling lanterns, stoves and heaters. Make sure lighting and heating devices are cool before refueling. Do not dispose of flammable liquids by tossing them on the ground, and store fuel away from appliances.
* Do not discard cigarettes, matches and smoking materials from moving vehicles, or anywhere on park grounds. Be certain to completely extinguish cigarettes before disposing them.
* Follow local ordinances when burning yard waste. Avoid backyard burning in windy conditions, and keep a shovel, water, and fire retardant nearby to keep fires in check. Remove all flammables from yard when burning.

Your professional fire fighters remind you that droughts increase the risk for wildfires. Droughts can occur in any climate, hot or cold.

Do not fight wildfires on your own – call 9-1-1 immediately.

For more information, review [the basics of defensible space and the “home ignition zone.”](http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/be-firewise/home-and-landscape/defensible-space.aspx?sso=eff2eb38-6314-45bb-9c5b-10a8d3379aed)

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