

America is Still Burning: FEMA, U.S. Fire Administration Releases Executive Summary Report Underscoring Nation's Increasing Fire Threat and Announces National Fire Strategy

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WASHINGTON -- Today, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), a component of FEMA, released the "[Executive Summary of the U.S. Fire Administrator's report](#)" following the first U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control held in October 2022. The Executive Summary outlines and previews key findings that will be included in a forthcoming Proceedings Report on the Summit, including several crucial recommendations to national leaders to address the nationwide fire problem, such as preparing all firefighters for climate-driven increase in wildfires and establishing a firefighter cancer screening and prevention strategy.

The testimonies, delivered by national fire service leaders, identified problems in America's fire service, and recommended solutions. These proposed solutions have become the basis for the Fire Service National Strategy, championed by the USFA, and include:

- Preparing all firefighters for the climate-driven increase in wildfires in the wildland urban interface (WUI) by providing them with the proper training and equipment.
- Investing in a national apprenticeship program to address the shortage of firefighters and to make the fire service more diverse and inclusive.
- Establishing a comprehensive firefighter cancer strategy that invests in research, provides access to screening for firefighters, and reduces and eliminates exposure to dangerous contaminants **such as PFAS**, otherwise known as "forever chemicals," which have been linked to cancer and other health problems.



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- Providing behavioral health resources and suicide prevention initiatives for all firefighters.
- Creating safer communities by implementing and enforcing codes and standards, especially in the WUI and in underserved and vulnerable populations providing affordable and fire-safe housing.

“Now, more than ever, we have the means to address the fire-related challenges we face, including wildfire due to climate change, improvements in codes and standards to protect our most vulnerable citizens, developing recruitment programs for a diverse and well-trained American fire service and the reduction of cancer-causing chemicals affecting firefighters, as well as supporting the mental health of our first responders,” said U.S. Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell. “Innovative thinking, the willingness to use all available tools, and, perhaps most importantly, the collaboration of all parties is necessary to meet these challenges.”

The summit marked the 75th anniversary of President Harry S. Truman’s Conference on Fire Prevention, which took place in Washington, D.C., in 1947. The summit also coincided with the 100th anniversary of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Fire Prevention Week. The Biden-Harris Administration continued President Truman’s legacy with virtual remarks from both President Biden and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas, illustrating the entire federal government’s commitment to reducing the death toll caused by fires.

During the summit, internationally recognized scientists and leaders presented the challenges Americans face due to today's fire problem, and the U.S. Fire Administration is committed to helping Americans fully understand their fire risks.

“Despite our vast technological advances, in this country your chances of dying in a fire today are higher than 40 years ago, you have the least amount of time to safely exit your burning home than at any time in history. Moreover, this persistent fire problem presents a glaring equity issue, as fire deaths, injuries and displacement disproportionately affect lower income communities and people of color,” added Dr. Moore-Merrell. “Since the summit, the U.S. Fire Administration and national fire service organizations have been working together to develop comprehensive and actionable solutions to these problems and this proceedings report represents just the beginning of a comprehensive and strategic approach to addressing these challenges.”



To read the U.S. Fire Administrator's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control Executive Summary, please visit [here](#). The 2023 Summit on Fire Prevention and Control will take place the week of Oct. 8, 2023.



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