LARA
LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

FIRE SERVICES

Safety During Extreme Fire Danger Conditions

To: Michigan Fire Service

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have been closely monitoring the fire weather and fuel conditions throughout the spring fire season and that has now extended into early summer. The current fuel moisture conditions across the northern lower peninsula and the central and eastern portions of the upper peninsula are at record low levels in many places for this time of year.

We urge you to be extra diligent with firefighter safety when responding to wildland fire calls during these conditions as fires will likely be burning with higher-than-normal intensity and faster rates of spread. The health and safety of firefighters is always on all of our minds and is especially important to discuss in conditions like these.

- Surface fires are readily torching conifer trees when they are present and are rapidly intensifying into intermittent and sustained crown fires where contiguous conifer fuels are present.

- The probability of ignition is at or near 100% in all upland fuel types, meaning that any fire brand that lands in these fuel beds will highly likely result in a wildland fire. Should a fire occur, expect spot fires to start ahead of the main fire and be cautious of spot fires well outside of established control lines.

- It is especially critical during times like these that initial attack resources responding to a wildfire do not block access for additional resources responding should they be needed. If possible, avoid dragging long lengths of hose across roads and access points leading into a fire which increases response time of wildland firefighting equipment and the establishment of containment line.

- Should a fire grow beyond the ability for our joint initial attack forces to control, be prepared for a shift in priorities to focus on structure triage, pre-treatment, and protection ahead of the fire in the direction of spread.

- Please enforce your current policies regarding the use of personal protective equipment when working on a wildland fire. Nomex, hardhat, boots, and gloves should be worn at all times to provide reasonable protection from hazards associated with wildland fires.

- Establish an anchor point with control lines (even wet lines) to prevent fires from escaping near the heal and potentially resulting in entrapment concerns.

Protecting the public that we serve, and our firefighters is our top priority. We appreciate your partnership to ensure everyone's safety.

The Michigan DNR is putting out quite a bit of messaging on social media and their website, so please use that as a resource to help share messages out to your local communities.

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