

# Illinois Extension Farm Fire Risks and Prevention



Combine fires are one of the most common and expensive types of fire incidents in production agriculture, but certainly not the only type possible. A variety of factors, including the environment, can increase the risk of farm fires around a farm operation. Increased awareness, preparation, and making time for safety checks can assist in farm fire risk and prevention.



## Practices Contributing to Fire Risk Environmental

- Little precipitation.
- Low soil moisture.
- Low relative humidity.
- High wind.
- High temperature.

## Around the Farm

- Operating during fire risk conditions.
- Lack of equipment maintenance.
- Debris-clogged cooling systems.
- Bearing failures can cause sparks.
- Dry vegetation, residue, and loose soil.
- Smoking or intentional burning.

## Building and Storage

- Storing straw, hay, and combustibles.
- Electrical flaws.
- Ensure water heaters and pumps do not run dry.
- Improper use of shop heating devices.
- Welding and metal repair sparks can cause ignitions.

## Steps for Preparedness

- Check the weather forecast. If conditions are expected to be dry and windy, wait.
- Ensure the address is clearly visible from the road.
- Know the exact field identification and location.
- Access to water, fire extinguishers, and fire blankets.
- Access to equipment to create potential fire breaks.
- Maintain, clean, and monitor equipment for fire potential.
- Smoke detectors in buildings with alerts connected to a phone.
- Have a plan for all livestock.



## Resources

### Weather and Climate

- [US Drought Monitor](#)
- [Observed Precipitation](#)
- [Soil Moisture Estimates](#)
- [National Weather Service Local Forecast](#)
- [National Forecast](#)
- [Temperature and Precipitation Outlook](#)

### Farm and Fire Safety

- [Fire Potential Outlook](#)
- [Crop Conditions](#)
- [Harvest Fire Safety Tips](#)
- [Farm Fire Prevention Guide](#)



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Midwest Climate Hub  
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University of Illinois Extension, and Illinois State Water Survey

Modified October 2023



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