

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2026



Benton and Lincoln counties launch Wildfire Awareness Month campaign

BENTON & LINCOLN COUNTIES, Ore. — May is Wildfire Awareness Month, and Benton and Lincoln counties are partnering to launch a coordinated campaign encouraging residents to take steps now to prevent wildfires and prepare their homes and families.

With current conditions across Oregon, fire experts are predicting a potentially difficult wildfire season. Local officials say early action and community awareness are critical to reducing risk and protecting lives, property and natural resources.

The campaign brings together the counties leadership, emergency management and public health to share information and resources throughout May.

“Wildfire doesn’t recognize county lines,” said Lincoln County Emergency Manager Samantha Buckley. “Working together allows us to better serve and protect our communities across the region.”

“Preparedness starts before fire season begins,” said Benton County Emergency Manager Bryan Lee. “The steps we take today can help protect lives, homes and our communities.”

Benton and Lincoln County commissioners support the campaign and emphasize the importance of regional coordination in addressing wildfire risk.

“Wildfire preparedness is a priority for our counties,” said Benton County Public Information Officer Anne Thwait. “We are proud to partner with Lincoln County to provide clear, coordinated information that helps keep our communities safe.”

Throughout May, the campaign will highlight key topics including wildfire prevention, home preparedness, smoke and air quality, and evacuation planning, especially for vulnerable populations.

Residents are encouraged to take action now by learning more and preparing ahead of wildfire season. Staying informed during wildfire season is also critical. Residents in both counties are encouraged to sign up for local emergency alerts and follow official county channels for real-time updates, evacuation notices and safety information.

- Benton County residents can sign up for emergency alerts at: <https://sheriff.bentoncountyor.gov/linn-benton-alert/>
- Lincoln County residents can sign up for alerts at: <https://oralert.gov/>

Residents are encouraged to take action now by learning more and preparing ahead of wildfire season. Resources are available from Oregon partners. These resources include guidance on creating defensible space, preventing human-caused fires, preparing a go-kit, understanding smoke impacts and planning for evacuations.

Prevention & Preparedness

Keep Oregon Green

- Wildfire prevention tips: [Prevent Wildfires - Keep Oregon Green](#)

Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM)

- Defensible space & home hardening: [Oregon State Fire Marshal : Wildfire in Oregon](#)
- Wildfire risk reduction: [Oregon State Fire Marshal : Prevent Wildfires](#)

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)

- Fire season restrictions & prevention: [Oregon Department of Forestry : Fire](#)

Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

- Wildfire smoke & health: [Oregon Health Authority : Wildfires and Smoke : Get Prepared](#)

Oregon Emergency Management (OEM)

- Emergency preparedness (go kits, evacuation): [Oregon Department of Emergency Management : Wildfires](#)
- [Oregon Department of Emergency Management : Be 2 Weeks Ready](#)

Media contacts:

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* Español a continuación *

SOCIAL MEDIA POST (Kickoff – May 4)

🔥 May is Wildfire Awareness Month. Are you ready?

With current conditions across Oregon, experts are predicting a potentially difficult wildfire season.

Lincoln and Benton counties are teaming up this month to help our communities stay safe, prepared and informed.

“Wildfire doesn’t recognize county lines,” said Lincoln County Emergency Manager Samantha Buckley. “Working together allows us to better serve and protect our communities.”

“Preparedness starts before fire season begins,” said Benton County Emergency Manager Bryan Lee. “The steps we take today can help protect lives, homes and our communities.”

This is just the start ... we’ll be sharing tips and resources all month long to help you prepare, protect and support your community.

👉 Start here: <https://www.co.lincoln.or.us/770/Hazards-Wildfire>

#WildfireReady #PreparedTogether #BentonCounty #LincolnCounty

🔥 Mayo es el Mes de Crear Conciencia sobre los Incendios Forestales. ¿Está preparado?

Dadas las condiciones actuales en todo Oregón, los expertos pronostican una temporada de incendios forestales potencialmente difícil.

Los condados de Lincoln y Benton se unen este mes para ayudar a nuestras comunidades a mantenerse seguras, preparadas e informadas.

“Los incendios forestales no reconocen las fronteras entre condados», afirmó Samantha Buckley, Gerente de Emergencias del Condado de Lincoln. «Trabajar juntos nos permite servir y proteger mejor a nuestras comunidades”.

“La preparación comienza antes de que inicie la temporada de incendios”, señaló Bryan Lee, Gerente de Emergencias del Condado de Benton. “Las medidas que tomemos hoy pueden ayudar a proteger vidas, hogares y a nuestras comunidades”.

Esto es solo el comienzo... compartiremos consejos y recursos durante todo el mes para ayudarle a prepararse, protegerse y apoyar a su comunidad.

👉 Empiece aquí: <https://www.co.lincoln.or.us/770/Hazards-Wildfire>

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PHOTO CAPTIONS



An evacuation route near wooded areas in Benton County's Oak Creek Valley highlight the importance of evacuation planning and wildfire preparedness in high-risk, forested communities. (Benton County photo)

SP: Una ruta de evacuación cerca de zonas boscosas en el valle de Oak Creek, en el Condado de Benton, destaca la importancia de la planificación de la evacuación y la preparación ante incendios forestales en comunidades boscosas de alto riesgo. (Foto del Condado de Benton)



Smoke fills the skies in Salem at the Capitol Mall. (Oregon Department of Transportation photo)

SP: El humo llena los cielos en Salem, en la Plaza del Capitolio. (Foto del Departamento de Transporte de Oregón)



ODOT Crews work to reopen OR 18 between U.S. 101 and Rose Lodge in Lincoln County, Sept. 2020. (Oregon Department of Transportation photo)

SP: Equipos del Departamento de Transporte de Oregón (ODOT por sus siglas en inglés) trabajan para reabrir la OR 18 entre la U.S. 101 y Rose Lodge, en el Condado de Lincoln, septiembre de 2020. (Foto del Departamento de Transporte de Oregón)



Fall Creek Road Fire - Helicopter Pouring Water over the Fire - July 30, 2018 (Lincoln County Emergency Management photo)

SP: Incendio de Fall Creek Road — Helicóptero arrojando agua sobre el fuego — 30 de julio de 2018 (Foto de Manejo de Emergencias del Condado de Lincoln)