

Deadly Forest Fires Engulf Central, Eastern Russia

May 08, 2023



A firefighter battles a wildfire near the village of Bogorodinskoye in the Tyumen region. **Maxim Slutsky / TASS**

Several people have been killed, more than 300 homes destroyed and states of emergency declared in two Russian regions as forest fires raged across western Siberia, news agencies reported Monday.

The governors of the Tyumen and Kurgan regions [issued](#) back-to-back emergency declarations Sunday as residents were evacuated and efforts to contain the fast-moving flames proved unsuccessful. Siberia's Omsk region [declared](#) a state of emergency the next day.

Authorities said three people were [killed](#) and six hospitalized with injuries due to the fires in the Kurgan region on Sunday.

The death toll reached six by Monday morning, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#), citing unnamed sources in the regional healthcare sector.

Officials in the Tyumen region reported one death and two injuries earlier Monday.

A 49-year-old man died while trying to put out a fire near the village of Krasny Yar, the regional administration said.

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Russia's forest management authority [said](#) 154 forest fires in 18 mostly Siberian and Far East regions have engulfed 93,300 hectares (230,500 acres) of land nationwide as of Monday.

It noted that 176 forest fires had been extinguished in 26 regions the previous day.

President Vladimir Putin spoke with Kurgan regional officials by phone and promised support to all fire victims, Russian emergencies minister Alexander Kurenkov [said](#) Monday.

“The president promised support — we won't abandon anyone,” Kurgan region Governor Vadim Shumkov said Monday.

The Kurgan region has called off its Victory Day parade, held each year on May 9, due to the intensity of the fires, Shumkov [said](#).

Scientists have blamed climate change on the intensified seasonal forest fires across Russia and Europe in recent years.

In Russia, the problem has been exacerbated by a lack of resources for firefighting combined with the remote locations of many fires.

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