



— The wildfire regime in Canada is changing: More area is burning with fewer fires

The **yearly number of fires** in Canada has been decreasing since 1988, but the **amount of land burned** each year has been increasing since 1959.



Since 1980, lightning-caused fires have become more frequent and are burning more area in Canada.

Compared to human-caused fires, **lightning-caused fires burn the majority of land in Canada.**



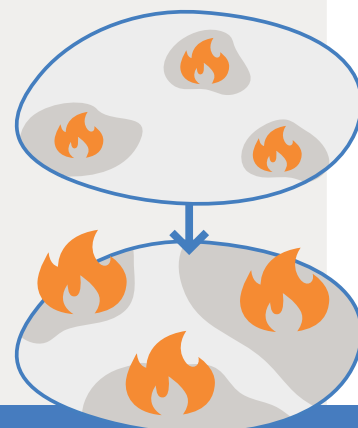
While **land burned by human-caused fires** was decreasing before 2005, it has been increasing in the last 19 years.

This is likely because weather has become drier across Canada in recent years. Dry vegetation is more likely to catch fire, and those fires are more likely to spread. This amplifies the risk of every tossed cigarette, improper campfire or hot ATV engine, even if most people continue to follow fire prevention guidance. Most human-caused fires are accidental, few are deliberate arson.



A few large fires (5% of all fires from 1959-2024) are responsible for 98% of the land that has burned in Canada.

Large fires are getting larger in Canada — there are now more individual fires that burn >20 000 ha than there were in the past (an area roughly the size of the City of Saskatoon).



There are **more large wildfires in Canada today** than in the recent past, and this trend is likely to continue. Large fires that are burning very hot and fast are more challenging and dangerous for firefighters to respond to. For the largest, hottest fires, only a change in weather or terrain (i.e., fire burning up to a large water body or rocky area, or into land with fewer trees) will change how the fire is burning. Wildfires in Canada are changing; therefore, everyone in our society must do their part to proactively reduce their wildfire risk and prevent human-caused wildfires. Learn more about how to do this through [FireSmart Canada](#) and your provincial/territorial firefighting agency.

