

DAILY PREPAREDNESS BRIEF

Household Edition -- Monday, 3 August 2026
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⚠ PREPAREDNESS CONDITION 3 -- BROWN SKY -- INCIDENT PROBABLE ⚠

Monday, 3 August 2026 | PREP-CON 3 BROWN SKY | WX-CON 3 GUARDED | SWX-CON 2 MODERATE: a G2 (Moderate) geomagnetic storm was recorded yesterday evening and unsettled conditions may continue today

THE ONE THING TODAY

SPOKANE WILDFIRES DESTROY MORE THAN 600 HOMES AND BUILDINGS; WASHINGTON UNDER A STATEWIDE WILDFIRE EMERGENCY

Three fires started around Spokane, Washington on Saturday 1 August during dangerous fire weather and moved fast. More than 600 structures have been destroyed, and Level 3 "Go Now" evacuation orders covered large parts of the city. None of the three fires is contained. The governor declared a statewide wildfire emergency and a statewide burn ban, with 17 other fires burning in Washington. The utility Avista also began shutting off power on purpose in parts of eastern Washington and northern Idaho to stop power lines from starting more fires, and says power will stay off until crews can inspect the lines.

If you are anywhere in the Inland Northwest, check your evacuation zone status today rather than relying on yesterday's. If you are in a planned-shutoff area, plan for the power to be out for more than one day.

WHAT TO WATCH -- THIS 24 HOURS



WILDFIRE -- NATIONAL FIRE LEVEL STILL AT MAXIMUM

The national wildfire preparedness level is still 5 out of 5, the highest there is, with 99 large fires burning uncontained across the country. Nearly 5.3 million acres have burned so far this year. Firefighting crews from Australia and New Zealand have arrived to help in the Northwest, and Air Force Reserve air tankers have been sent to Oregon. That level of outside help is a sign of how stretched US crews are right now.



SEVERE WEATHER TODAY -- MINNESOTA, THE DAKOTAS, AND SOUTHEAST ARIZONA

The Storm Prediction Center has a Slight risk of severe storms today for northern Minnesota into the eastern Dakotas, where large hail, damaging wind and an isolated tornado are possible this afternoon and evening. There is a separate Slight risk for southeastern Arizona, where the main hazard is wind gusts of 60 to 75 mph as storms push down into the lower deserts in the evening. A weaker risk of damaging wind exists across the northern Mid-Atlantic and western New England if the sun comes out enough.



SPACE WEATHER -- A MODERATE SOLAR STORM ARRIVED YESTERDAY

A blast of solar material that left the sun on 30 July reached Earth on Sunday afternoon and produced a G2 (Moderate) geomagnetic storm. For almost everyone this is harmless. It can cause brief GPS accuracy drops and radio fading far to the north, and the northern lights may be visible as far south as New York, Wisconsin, Washington state and Idaho if skies are clear. No household action is needed. Unsettled conditions may continue today.



EBOLA -- NOW THE LARGEST OUTBREAK EVER RECORDED IN THE DRC

The World Health Organization now reports 3,605 confirmed cases and 1,587 deaths in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a fatality rate around 44%. This has become the largest Ebola outbreak ever recorded in that country, and WHO describes it as still intensifying. It has spread from one area to five provinces. There is still no approved vaccine or treatment for this particular strain. For US households, the practical risk remains very low. There is no outbreak in the United States. The point to take from this is that it is not being contained yet, so it is worth continuing to watch rather than assuming it has peaked.



CYBER -- ONE NEW SECURITY FLAW, AND THE OLD BACKLOG IS STILL OPEN

One new actively exploited flaw was added to the federal must-patch list this week, affecting Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center -- mostly a business and IT product rather than a home one. Its patch deadline was 1 August and has already passed. The older backlog is still open: Microsoft SharePoint, SimpleHelp, iCagenda and Balboa Forms all missed their deadlines and are being actively exploited. For home users the action is unchanged: turn on automatic updates for your phone, computer and router.

WHAT TODAY'S IRAN NEWS MEANS FOR YOU

The picture changed twice in the last week. The US carried out a large wave of strikes on Iran on 29-30 July, then stopped. On Saturday 1 August the president cancelled another planned attack, saying the outline of a deal had been agreed after Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Iran asked him to hold off. Talks are set to restart today. Iran has not publicly confirmed agreeing to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, so treat the reopening as claimed rather than settled. Updated official figures put US military deaths in this conflict at 18 since late February, with 624 wounded -- higher than the number carried in earlier briefs, which we are correcting here.

Gas prices: the national average is \$4.09 a gallon, unchanged from a week ago and about a dollar higher than this time last year. US crude fell about 6% on Monday morning on the news that talks were restarting, but that has not reached the pump yet and may not if the pause does not hold.

Shipping/delivery delays: shipping through the Strait of Hormuz is still running at roughly a tenth of normal levels. If you are expecting an overseas shipment or run a business that depends on imported goods, keep building in extra time.

No safety action needed in the US: there is no credible threat to US soil tied to this at this time. For the vast majority of households this remains a wallet and planning item, not a safety item.

PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST -- TODAY'S PRIORITIES

WILDFIRE AND PLANNED POWER SHUTOFFS (if you are in the Inland Northwest or fire country)

- ☐ Check your evacuation zone status today -- do not assume yesterday's status still applies
- ☐ If a Level 3 "Go Now" order covers your area: leave immediately, do not wait
- ☐ Go bag in the vehicle: medications, documents, phone charger, water, pet supplies
- ☐ If you are in a planned power shutoff area: charge devices now and plan for more than one day without power
- ☐ Monitor nifc.gov, your county emergency management page, and NWS fire weather alerts
- ☐ Sign up for county emergency alerts at your county EM website if you have not already

SEVERE STORM SAFETY (northern Minnesota, eastern Dakotas, southeast Arizona today)

- ☐ Know where your safe room is -- lowest floor, interior room, away from windows
- ☐ Bring in or secure anything outside that can become a projectile in 60+ mph wind
- ☐ In southeast Arizona, the hazard is sudden strong wind gusts in the evening rather than tornadoes -- avoid being on the road in a high-profile vehicle
- ☐ Have two ways to get warnings, since a phone alert can fail -- weather radio, a local station, and a warning app

GENERAL MONDAY MORNING PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Check your NOAA weather radio -- 23 transmitters are out of service or degraded nationwide, up from 18 last week, so confirm your own area and know your backup alert method
- ☐ If you or your employer run Microsoft SharePoint, SimpleHelp, iCagenda or Balboa Forms, those federal patch deadlines have all passed -- patch now
- ☐ Turn on automatic updates on your phone, computer and home router if they are not already on -- that covers most home users for this week's cyber items
- ☐ Family communications plan: do you have a meeting place and an out-of-area contact if phones are down?

CONDITION SUMMARY

PREP-CON 3 BROWN SKY	Incident Probable -- several serious situations are running at once: the US-Iran conflict, which has now swung from a new strike wave to cancelled strikes and restarted talks in under a week; the national wildfire posture at its highest level with more than 600 structures destroyed around Spokane; and a moderate solar storm. None of these requires most US households to act today, but together they are why the level is held at 3 rather than lowered.
WX-CON 3 GUARDED -- Severe Weather	WX-CON 3 GUARDED, held. Today carries a Slight risk of severe storms for northern Minnesota into the eastern Dakotas and a separate Slight risk for southeastern Arizona. On the wildfire side, today's official fire weather outlook lists elevated but no critical areas, which is an improvement on the weekend conditions that started the Spokane fires. Our analysts have recommended raising this level because of the scale of structure loss; that decision sits with the watch officer and has not been made yet.
SWX-CON 2 MODERATE -- Solar Storm Recorded	A G2 (Moderate) geomagnetic storm was recorded at 1:59 p.m. Eastern on Sunday 2 August after a solar eruption on 30 July reached Earth. Expect nothing more than possible brief GPS wobble, radio fading far to the north, and a chance of northern lights. Unsettled conditions may continue today.
COMCON 4 Increased Vigilance	23 NOAA weather radio transmitters are out of service or degraded nationwide, up from 18 last week -- always confirm your own area's status and keep a backup way to receive alerts. New Mexico is the notable gap: Artesia, Carlsbad and Roswell are all out at once, leaving Chaves, Eddy and Lincoln counties without primary weather radio coverage during fire season. If you live there, rely on wireless emergency alerts on your phone, the FEMA app, and local radio.

RESOURCES

Emergency preparedness planning: fortunefavorstheprepared.com
Daily Threat Report (practitioner): fortunefavorstheprepared.com/dtr
NIFC National Fire News: nifc.gov/fire-information/nfn
NOAA Space Weather Center: swpc.noaa.gov
SPC Severe Weather Outlooks: spc.noaa.gov
Washington wildfire and evacuation information: wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov
WHO Ebola outbreak updates: who.int
American Red Cross disaster welfare: redcross.org

END

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