



## Nebraska Wildfires (Counties of Arthur, Dawson, Frontier, Garden, Keith, Lincoln, and Morrill) 03/16/2026

### Office of the Governor

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Governor Jim Pillen  
1445 K Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402-471-2244

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[Governor Jim Pillen \(@TeamPillen\) / X](#)

[Governor Jim Pillen - YouTube](#)

*“**KEITH COUNTY, NE** -- Today, Governor Jim Pillen provided an update on operations following an aerial tour of wildfires burning across Nebraska. He was joined in the briefing at the Keith County Fairgrounds by U.S. Senator Pete Ricketts and U.S. Representative Adrian Smith. Lt. Colonel Scott Henrickson, chief of the joint staff for the Nebraska National Guard also spoke, providing an update on personnel and equipment deployed by the Nebraska National Guard to support local firefighters.*

*In total, three of the state’s largest wildfires have damaged around 600,000 acres. Gov. Pillen spoke specifically about impacts resulting from the Morrill County Fire, which has now consumed 460,000 acres and the Lincoln County (Cottonwood Fire) near Gothenburg, which has burned 100,000 acres. The Road 203 Fire near Halsey has burned 40,000 acres.*

*Gov. Pillen emphasized that the state is taking a proactive approach to enlisting additional resources for fire suppression and providing assistance to community volunteer firefighters, who have been working around the clock. Earlier today, he called the mayors of Omaha, Lincoln and Columbus to see what fire personnel and equipment they would be able to provide. He also indicated he would contact other mayors and nearby states like Iowa, to see what assistance they could lend.*

*“This is a fight from the river to Harrison, and I’m really excited that we’re getting people deployed to help our volunteer firefighters,” he added.*

*The Nebraska National Guard has deployed 29 airmen and soldiers to assist with firefighting efforts in central and western Nebraska. That includes a ground firefighting hand crew, which is working shoulder to shoulder with local fire teams. Two Nebraska Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters*

*equipped with Bambi buckets have also been flown to the area for aerial firefighting support.*

*“We are working to get more resources into the state, but as we heard, there are multiple fires across multiple states,” said Lt. Col. Henrickson. “We are still working to see what is available and of course, bring that up in a unified effort here with the local emergency management team as well as our Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).”*

*NEMA has requested and received approval from FEMA for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG), which is designed to help support efforts to mitigate, manage, and control fires on public or private forests or grasslands. That assistance may help recover some of the costs associated with the state’s ongoing fire response.*

*Gov. Pillen also mentioned ongoing assistance from the Nebraska Department of Transportation which is providing road graders in order to create necessary roadblocks to prevent the spread of flames.*

*During the news conference, the Governor reiterated a message shared previously – the need to heed any locally-issued evacuation orders. Officials yesterday confirmed one fire-related fatality.*

*“I think it’s important that all Nebraskans pray. The circumstances have not changed. Yesterday was one of the toughest days, and through the night, that we’ve probably ever experienced in our state,” said Gov. Pillen. “Tomorrow, the winds are supposed to be extraordinary.”*

## **Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency**

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Nebraska Emergency Management Agency  
2433 N.W. 24th Street  
Lincoln, NE 68524-1801  
402-471-7421

[NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY](#)

[Nebraska Emergency Management Agency | Lincoln NE | Facebook](#)

[X](#)

[Nebraska Emergency Management Agency - YouTube](#)

Nebraska Preparedness Partnership  
PO Box 460715  
Papillion, NE 68046  
402-979-7207

[Nebraska Preparedness Partnership - Home](#)

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[WildApricot \(@WildApricot\) / X](#)

## **American Red Cross**

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American Red Cross Nebraska  
2912 S. 80th Ave.  
Omaha, NE 68124  
402-343-7700

Central and Western Nebraska Red Cross  
404 E. 3rd Street  
Grand Island, NE 68801  
308-382-3790

[Nebraska Region | American Red Cross](#)  
[American Red Cross Serving Nebraska and Southwest Iowa | Facebook](#)  
[Red Cross Nebraska-SW Iowa - YouTube](#)  
[x.com/neiaredcross](https://www.facebook.com/neiaredcross)

Please see the following link for the most updated information on available shelters: [Disaster Shelters | Find Shelters | American Red Cross](#)

## **Department of Transportation**

Nebraska Department of Transportation  
1500 Nebraska Parkway  
Lincoln, NE 68502  
402-471-4567  
[NDOT Home - NDOT](#)  
[Nebraska DOT \(@NebraskaDOT\) / X](#)

## **United Way/211 Information and Referrals Lines**

These information and referral lines may know of additional resources currently providing assistance, such as food pantries, clothing closets, emergency shelters, and agencies offering financial assistance. Please dial 2-1-1 and provide your zip code and demographic information in order to receive referrals. Information can also be obtained at [Call 211 for Essential Community Services | United Way 211](#).

[211 Resource Hotline | Heartland United Way](#)

## **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

(800) 621-3362  
[FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

Please visit the website and click on “*Disaster Declarations*”. If a disaster is declared, please call to apply for assistance by phone, or visit: [Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#) to apply online.

**[DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov)**

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## [Home | disasterassistance.gov](#)

Offers information about local resources for disasters, including: FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), Red Cross, food, shelter, state emergency management agencies, and hospital locators.

To determine if individual disaster assistance is available through FEMA, please visit the website and enter the address.

To locate your local state emergency management agency for disaster information and updates, please visit: [Search Your Location | FEMA.gov](#)

## **American Red Cross National**

(800) 733-2767

[American Red Cross | Help Those Affected by Disasters](#)

## **National Weather Service**

Weather alerts by state are available at: [Active Alerts \(weather.gov\)](#).

## **The Weather Channel**

Local forecasts and severe weather.

[National and Local Weather Radar, Daily Forecast, Hurricane and information from The Weather Channel and weather.com.](#)

## **Safe Travel USA**

[SafeTravelUSA](#)

## **National Traffic And Road Closure Information**

[National Traffic and Road Closure Information | Federal Highway Administration \(dot.gov\)](#)

## **Free Help Line**

Optum, a leading health and behavioral health services company, is offering a free emotional-support help line.

The toll-free number, 866-447-3573, will be open Monday-Friday, 8am-8pm CST. The service is free of charge and open to anyone. Specially trained Optum mental health specialists help people manage their stress and anxiety so they can continue to address their everyday needs. Callers may also receive referrals to community resources to help them with specific concerns, including financial and legal matters.

Along with the toll-free help line, emotional-support resources and information are available online at <https://www.liveandworkwell.com>.