

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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HUMIDITY AND FOREST FIRES

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Humidity has lately become a matter of great interest to foresters and lumbermen because of discoveries concerning its connection with forest fires. The litter of a forest dries out rapidly when the humidity of the air is low and absorbs moisture from the air when the humidity of the latter is high. Thus, humidity, more than any one other weather element, determines the inflammability of such material and the consequent fire hazard. Rain may be lacking for weeks, high winds may blow, and yet the danger of fire will remain small provided the humidity of the air continues high. A humidity of 30 per cent. is regarded as the danger line in the forests of the Northwestern United States.

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