

Hundreds of wildfires spread throughout U.S. state of California



Sacramento, August 20 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of California, hundreds of wildfires triggered by lightning strikes have exploded in size, fanned by gusty winds and record-high temperatures driven by the climate crisis.

Governor Gavin Newsom has declared a statewide emergency and mobilized the National Guard. He told reporters: “We are experiencing fires, the likes of which we haven’t seen in many, many years — the totality, when you consider 367 active fires that we are aware of all across the state of California.”

Thick smoke from the fires has blanketed parts of Northern California, including the Bay Area, where fires have consumed over 124,000 acres and are threatening tens of thousands of structures. Air quality in parts of the region on Wednesday registered as the worst in the world, with residents urged to remain inside with their windows and doors closed.

Meanwhile, California’s reliance on prison labor has led to a shortage of fire crews. Prison officials have placed 12 of California’s 43 prisoner fire camps on lockdown due to a massive outbreak of COVID-19 at a Northern California prison that serves as a training center for prisoners — who are paid just \$1 an hour to

fight blazes.

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