

Strong winds reignite fire near Athens as heatwave sears Greece

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Athens, July 21 (RHC)-- Firefighters in Greece are battling a reignited wildfire that has triggered a series of new evacuations, as authorities braced for more of the extreme weather that has brought searing temperatures across southern Europe.

Authorities had declared the wildfire contained overnight but firefighters lost control later on Thursday when the winds gathered strength.

“It’s day four of these wildfires; they had contained the flames and then as the afternoon progressed, the wind picked up again and that’s when the reigniting of fires happened,” Al Jazeera’s Stefanie Dekker, reporting from near the smouldering ruins of a chemical plant in Voiotia, said. The huge fire has already burned 35 square kilometres (13.5 square miles) of forest and scrubland.

In his latest news briefing on Thursday afternoon, Fire Service spokesman Yiannis Artopoulos said there had been 62 forest fires across Greece over the previous 24 hours. He added the extreme weather conditions were creating “dynamic fire fronts”, noting that authorities had issued evacuation orders for several areas across West Attica.

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