
The emergency services in Spain and other European countries, Greece and France are still struggling to control forest fires. Thousands of acres have been destroyed. From Madrid, Danny Wood reports:

Many parts of Europe remain **on a fire alert**. In Aragon, the worst affected Spanish region, the authorities say 500 personnel, supported by **water planes** and helicopters, are still **battling blazes**.

A week of flames has destroyed an area the size of one hundred square kilometres. In Spain's southern province of Almeria, the fires are **under control** but more than 10 villages are without water and electricity.

In central Greece and southern Italy firefighters are working to **contain blazes** that caused the **evacuation** of hundreds of people. On the French island of Corsica, another major fire is still burning.

The authorities believe some of **the fires were deliberately lit** and in Spain, where six firefighters have died, more than 15 **people suspected of starting blazes** are reported to have been arrested.

Temperatures in southern Europe are expected to remain very high and firefighters are watching for new **outbreaks**.

Danny Wood, BBC News, Spain

Vocabulary and definitions

| | |
|--|--|
| on a fire alert | prepared to deal with fires which might happen soon |
| water planes | aeroplanes which carry large amounts of water and which fly over large areas of land on fire and drop water to try to put out the fire |
| battling blazes | fighting or trying to extinguish or put out fires |
| a week of flames | fires which have been burning for 7 days |
| under control | contained, not spreading further |
| contain blazes | stop the fires from spreading |
| evacuation | official movement of people from a dangerous place to a safe one |
| the fires were deliberately lit | people started the fires intentionally; the fires weren't accidental |
| people suspected of starting blazes | people who allegedly began the fires |
| outbreaks | sudden beginnings of things, especially dangerous or unpleasant things (here, fires) |

More on this story: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8169232.stm>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsintheneeds/2009/07/090729_fires.shtml