

Fire damages homes in southern Greece; more blazes active

July 25 2022, by DEMETRIS NELLAS



A house is on fire near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP

A major fire has broken out in southern Greece, burning homes in villages not far from the famous archaeological site of Ancient Olympia and prompting the evacuations of six villages.

The [fire](#) broke out Sunday afternoon near the villages of Krestena and Skillountia, which are south and southeast of Ancient Olympia. Authorities messaged residents there and in four other villages to evacuate quickly.

Fire Service spokesman Yannis Artopoulos said 125 firefighters and 43 fire engines were operating in the area, as well as four planes and four helicopters, but the aircraft can't operate at night. On a positive note, the prevailing northwesterly winds were pushing the fire to the southeast, up a mountain and away from Ancient Olympia, authorities said.

At least six more significant fires were burning across the country Sunday, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Artopoulos said 141 wildfires had started in Greece over the past three days.

The fire on the Greek island of Lesbos, which required the evacuation of over 450 tourists and locals Saturday, is slowly being controlled, with only scattered blazes late Sunday afternoon, [local authorities](#) said.

But two fires still threaten Greek nature reserves, one in the northeastern region of Thrace, close to the Turkish border, and another in the region of Western Macedonia.



A farmer drives his tractor next to a fire near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A Volunteer uses a hose to extinguish the fire near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A spark lights on a power cable as fire burns near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, while authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



Fire burns on a hill with pine trees near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A firefighting helicopter throws water near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A view of a burnt house following a forest fire near the beach resort of Vatera, on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. A fire that broke Saturday morning on the Greek island of Lesbos prompted authorities to call for the evacuation of the Vatera resort on the south side of the island. Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas



Fire burns behind a house near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A firefighter aircraft drops water over a forest fire as smoke rises near Vrisa village, on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. A fire that broke Saturday morning on the Greek island of Lesbos prompted authorities to call for the evacuation of the Vatera resort on the south side of the island.
Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas



A firefighting airplane throws water near the village of Krestena south of Ancient Olympia, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Athens, as authorities evacuate urgently another five villages in the area, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. There are at least six more fires burning across Greece, according to the fire service, with three of those burning for several days. Credit: Giannis Spyrounis/ilialive.gr via AP



A firefighting aircraft flies over a forest fire near the beach resort of Vatera, on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. A fire that broke Saturday morning on the Greek island of Lesbos prompted authorities to call for the evacuation of the Vatera resort on the south side of the island. Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas



A view of a burnt area following a forest fire near the beach resort of Vatera, on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos, on Sunday, July 24, 2022. A fire that broke Saturday morning on the Greek island of Lesbos prompted authorities to call for the evacuation of the Vatera resort on the south side of the island. Credit: AP Photo/Panagiotis Balaskas

Three other fires erupted Sunday, one in Western Macedonia, another in central Greece and the third on the island of Crete.

In the Dadia Forest, which hosts a number of rare bird species, firefighters and aid workers rescued injured animals and took them in for treatment. Late Sunday that blaze expanded again, forcing residents of the [village](#) of Dadia to evacuate for the second time in three days.

Hot and dry conditions, along with gusty winds, have prevailed for weeks in Greece. A [heat wave](#) that arrived Saturday pushed temperature past 41 degrees Celsius (105.8 degrees Fahrenheit) in some places. The heat is expected to persist for several days.

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