

Five dead in northern Italy storms, Sicily wildfires

July 25 2023



A man takes a photo of a car crushed under a fallen tree in Milan on July 25, 2023 after an overnight rainstorm hit the city.

At least five people were found dead in Italy Tuesday following violent storms in the north and wildfires in Sicily, which could lead the

government to declare a state of emergency in the hardest-hit regions.

A 16-year-old girl on a camping trip was among two people who died in storms that hit northern Italy, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said.

The teenager was killed when a tree fell on her tent during a scout camp near Brescia, after high winds and torrential rain overnight.

On Monday, a middle-aged woman died after also being hit by a falling tree in Lissone, north of Milan.

Meloni confirmed the two "tragic" deaths due to bad weather, and offered her thoughts to their loved ones on social media.

Milan residents reported torrential rain and hail in the early hours of Tuesday morning, which flooded streets and uprooted trees, many of which fell onto parked cars.

Transport authorities reported serious damage to the city's electricity network, while an AFP journalist said water in the historic center was temporarily shut off.

Firefighters said the situation was "very serious", reporting more than 200 calls for help across Milan since 4 am (0200 GMT).

But even as the north was drenched, the heat wave across the south persisted, with temperatures of 47.6 degrees Celsius (117 degrees Fahrenheit) recorded in the eastern Sicilian city of Catania on Monday.

The bodies of two people in the 70s were found in a house destroyed by the flames while another 88-year-old woman was found near the Sicilian city of Palermo, according to media reports Tuesday evening.

Sicily's regional president Renato Schifani said he planned to ask the government ahead of a Wednesday ministers' meeting to declare a state of emergency for the Mediterranean island.

Firefighters on the island spent a night battling wildfires, one of which got so close to Palermo airport that the facility was shut down for several hours Tuesday morning.

Italy's Civil Protection Department on Tuesday reported "extensive fires" across the south, saying air support had been requested for nine incidents in Sicily, nine in Calabria and another in Sardinia.

"We are experiencing in Italy one of the most complicated days in recent decades—rainstorms, tornadoes and giant hail in the north, and scorching heat and devastating fires in the center and south," said Civil Protection Minister Nello Musumeci.

Writing on Facebook, he added, "The climate upheaval that has hit our country demands of us all... a change of attitude."

© 2023 AFP

Citation: Five dead in northern Italy storms, Sicily wildfires (2023, July 25) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-07-storm-trees-milan-sicily-airport.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--