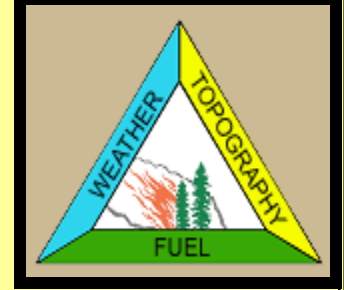




## TOPIC 42 FINE FUELS



**FINE FUELS** – Dry grass, dead leaves, tree needles, brush and small trees are light and fast burning fuels. Fine fuels cause rapid spread of fire. Large quantities of small, dry material will act as kindling to ignite large fuels. A lot of either small or large sized material means that there is a good chance of a hot fire.

The size of the fuel and the amount of moisture it contains are the two most important elements that determine whether or not a fire will start and how fast it will burn. The amount of moisture they pick up from the ground, from rain, or from the air. When considering the relative dryness of fuels, consider the time of day, the season, and the length of time since the last rainfall. Fine fuels will contain more moisture early in the morning than they will during the middle of the day.

Grass and other fuels are usually very dry before green-up early in the fire season, from mid-May to mid-June. Overall fuel moisture normally increases after green-up, from mid-June to early August and then drops off again as the foliage begins to die back going into the fall.

