

NEWS SERVICE



Manitoba Government

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328 FOREST FIRES BATTLED IN 1969

The Manitoba Department of Mines and Natural Resources reports that while the central and southern areas of the province had a record low incidence of forest fires in 1969, dry conditions across the north produced a heavy call on firefighting equipment.

There were 328 fires in Manitoba, 73 per cent of them in the northern part of the province. The annual number of fires over the past 20 years has averaged 327.

Sixty-two thousand acres was burned-over, covering 50,000 acres of non-forested land such as muskeg, treed swamp and scrub, 2,000 acres of young growth, and 10,000 acres of merchantable timber.

The average fire burned just over 186 acres, well below the average of 1,159 acres for each fire over the past 20 years.

Lightning strikes during a period of low precipitation this summer, which followed the northern drought of 1968, were the cause of the high northern fire incidence.

Three helicopters, two Canso water bombers, and Otter water bombers of the Manitoba Government Air Service were used in firefighting operations during the past year.