

# Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas

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## PRESS RELEASE

- CAQM has been actively monitoring paddy residue burning events for NCR and Adjoining Areas during this harvesting season for about a month now i.e. from 15<sup>th</sup> September onwards
- CAQM has held several meetings with Chief Secretaries, Agriculture Secretaries, Environment Secretaries and Member Secretaries of NCR Pollution Control Boards to substantially bring down the fire counts during the current harvesting season
- CAQM also reviewed the position with 23 District Magistrates (DMs) of Punjab, 22 DMs of Haryana and 8 DMs of U.P. (NCR) regarding effective implementation of State specific Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Stubble Burning in 2022
- Review with DCs/DMs focused *inter-alia* on Crop Residue Management (CRM) machinery utilization, IEC activities and enforcement measures including ensuring that CRM machineries are not allowed to remain idle
- Apart from reiterating the compelling urgency of preventive and corrective actions, they were also advised to ensure verification of all reported fire incidences within 48 hours and take strict action against the violators
- For the period 15.09.2022 - 16.10.2022, the total fire counts reported in Punjab are 1444, Haryana - 244, U.P. - 05, and Delhi - 02, as compared to 2375, 1026, 30 and nil respectively for the corresponding period for the previous year
- The total fire counts during this period have come down from 3431 to 1695 as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

## NEW DELHI:

To contain the problems arising out of farm fire incidents in the National Capital Region (NCR) and Punjab, the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) is regularly reviewing the position with Chief Secretaries of Punjab, NCR State Governments, Agriculture/ Environment Secretaries and Pollution Control Boards (PCBs). Review meetings were also held recently with 23 District Collectors / District Magistrates (DMs) of Punjab, 22 DMs/ DCs of Haryana, and 8 DMs/ DCs of NCR Districts of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) regarding the preparedness and implementation of action plan for Prevention and Control of Paddy Straw Burning in 2022.

During the review meetings, the DCs/ DMs briefed about their preparedness and informed that they have conducted meetings at their levels as well as with the nodal officers and will ensure that there is a substantial reduction in the number of stubble burning cases in their respective districts.

Further, the DCs elaborated the steps taken regarding utilization of available machinery, IEC activities especially in all hotspot villages, extending assistance to the *ex-situ* projects in their districts, interaction with the farmer communities and further informed that they are keeping strict vigil on the burning incidences. Haryana, Punjab and U.P. assured that with effective implementation of action plan, utilization of the CRM machinery, effective public campaign and strict enforcement, they would ensure substantial reduction in crop burning incidents this year.

It was noted that about 31,700 Custom Hiring Centers and cooperatives have been set up in Punjab, Haryana and UP (NCR) and more than 2 lakh CRM Machinery is available for utilization in Punjab, Haryana and NCR Districts of U.P. The need to intensify IEC activities like educational campaigns, awareness camps and publicity through print, electronic and social media was emphasized.

The State Governments were advised that the monitoring/enforcement mechanism as envisaged in the plan of action at the State level/ District level/ Sub-divisional level/ Cluster and Village level must be effectively utilized.

The Commission has been actively monitoring paddy residue burning events for a month now i.e. from 15th September 2022 onwards in the states of Punjab, Haryana

and 8 NCR Districts of U.P. The current year has so far seen a reduction from 3431 to 1695 fire counts as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The total farm fire incidents reported in Punjab are **1444** as against 2375 incidents in 2021, in Haryana are **244** as compared to 1026 in the previous year, and in U.P. (NCR) are **05** as against 30 fire incidents during the corresponding period of 2021. In NCT of Delhi, **02** fire incidents have been reported this year. No fire incident has been reported from the two NCR Districts of Rajasthan. During the current harvesting season, the first paddy residue burning incident was reported on 15<sup>th</sup> September in Punjab, on 18<sup>th</sup> September in Haryana, on 30<sup>th</sup> September in the NCR Districts of Uttar Pradesh and on 05<sup>th</sup> October in Delhi.

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