

# Beetle infestation poses fire risk in California

By Amy Graff, San Francisco Chronicle

A determined beetle the size of a rice grain is drilling into California's trees, turning the lush forest blanketing the Golden State into a sea of dead wood that's highly flammable.

The most recent data from 2015 estimates bark beetles have killed over 29 million trees, and Cal Fire Education Officer Amy Head said that number is now higher, increasing the fire risk even more.

"They're this itty bitty bug that can do an enormous amount of damage," Head said. "This bug is literally changing the face of our state."

Head is encouraging homeowners who live in urban interface areas to clear dead trees from their yards in preparation for the fire season.

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