

"The first forest fires were recorded by the Forest Conservation Service in April in certain parts of the Trans-Baikal", explained G. I. Zinov, Chief Inspector of Operations. "These did not give the foresters too much trouble. As a rule, the hot points of these fires were extinguished within a day of their discovery. But then the onset of summer gave us cause for alarm as more than a hundred fires broke out in the forests every day."

-- What has been the total number of forest fires so far this year?

"More than five thousand fires had been pinpointed in the RSFSR by June 8. The number for this same period last year was a little less: 4,500."

"A good indication of the danger posed by forest fires in the European portion of the RSFSR is given by the situation in the Meshchera Lowland, located at the junction of three oblasts - Vladimir, Ryazan, and Moscow. The basic difficulty in control in the areas are the dry pine forests and peat bogs, which react quickly to any rise in temperatures. In the recent past, 122 fires covering a total area of 85 hectares have broken out in Vladimir Oblast; 69 fires in Ryazan Oblast, covering 41 hectares; and 122 fires in Moscow Oblast, covering 30 hectares. The intensive efforts that have been made by the Forest Conservation Service are reflected in the fact that most of these fires were eliminated on the same day that they were discovered and before they had spread to more than one hectare of surface area."

The telephone rang. It was V. A. Naumov on the line - the Head of the Forest Conservation and Protection Section of the Ministry of Forestry, Mari ASSR.