

# Wine Country Fires Impacting Local Businesses

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NAPA COUNTY -- Two of the major fires burning in northern California are burning in Sonoma and Napa counties, two of the most well known wine producing counties in the world.

It is currently harvest season for wine grapes and while you may think the fires will affect the price of your favorite bottle, that may not be the case.

The skies over the Napa Valley look almost apocalyptic with so many wildfires burning nearby.

Through the thick smoke, wineries and tasting rooms' closed signs can be barely seen everywhere.

"We have to close because we really can't do much without electricity," said Alan Viader, Viader Winery.

On the Visit Napa Valley webpage, only 12 wineries are listed as open Tuesday. However, wine makers say even without power, they're still doing what they do best.

"We just kept on doing wine making the old school way without as much technology and electricity of course as we used to," said Jean Hoefliger, wine maker Alpha Omega Winery.

"It's back to extreme basics of filling up a bin with wine and juice and lifting it with a fork lift and having to manually push it into the tank," Viader said.

But sadly some wineries are not so lucky.

The Napa Valley Vintners Association says 14 of its members have had wildfires burn onto their properties, of which five are a complete loss.

"We haven't seen the economic damage and probably won't know that for some time," said association chairman Michael Honig.

However Honig says it's unlikely these fires will have an impact on the price of the bottle.

His association is made up of more than 500 wineries.

"If you look at California as a wine growing community, only 4% of the grapes that are grown in California come from the Napa Valley," Honig explained.