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During the period from 1860 to 1910, fire and fire safety marked the city in irreversible ways. Fire, an anthropogenic agent that can destroy structures and incite fear, changed human–nature relationships in the growing metropolis of Mexico City. Fire hazards offer a way to look at broader processes found in rapidly modernizing cities. They demonstrate how space is made and remade according to political and social agendas, how public services and technology get distributed unequally, and how the competing economic and political interests of private and public interest groups are reconciled with the collective necessity to create a safe environment. In other words, fire forced different groups, through varying measures of conflict and cooperation, to grapple with their hazardous environment and assert their interests in discussions about how best to confront it.