

TRAVIS COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE



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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUBJECT: Wildfire Danger

Travis County has experienced numerous wildfire ignitions over the past few weeks posing an increasing danger to the public as vegetation continues to dry out. Wildfire prevention is an individual responsibility and maintaining wildfire awareness is critical with our current conditions. The Travis County Fire Marshal encourages everyone to use extreme caution with fire and any potential ignition sources in order to prevent a catastrophic event from happening. No one wants to experience the tragic loss of life, property and natural resources that is occurring in many counties in Texas. In the past seven days the Texas Forest Service has responded to 68 fires for 16,419 acres. Currently 248 of the 254 counties in the state are reporting burn bans.

Temperatures are expected to continue to soar into the 100 to 110 range across most of the state. Along with the very hot temperatures, afternoon humidity levels will fall creating an enhanced fire weather threat.

Forest service and public safety officials recommend these safety measures:

- Obey the Burn Ban currently in effect in Travis County. Don't burn trash or debris. Unsafe burning of leaves, brush, household trash and other debris is the No. 1 cause of wildfires in Texas.
- Keep lawnmowers and agricultural equipment in proper working condition and avoid rocks and other materials which might cause a spark.
- Connect hoses to outside water faucets to help protect your home in the event of a wildfire.
- If you smoke inside your vehicle, extinguish cigarettes in an ashtray instead of tossing it out of the window or putting it out on the ground.
- Be cautious when pulling off a road or driving into a field as a vehicle's hot catalytic converter can ignite grass and other vegetation.
- If using a covered barbeque, extinguish hot charcoal or hot ashes with a garden hose before disposing of the coals.
- Any welding, cutting or grinding operations will need to be conducted in compliance with the guidelines outlined in the "Order Prohibiting Outdoor Burning". The Burn Ban and other wildfire preparedness guidelines are also available on our website at www.co.travis.tx.us/fire_marshal.