



## WAYS YOU CAN HELP KEEP TEXAS SAFE FROM WILDFIRES

Approximately 90% of wildfires in Texas are caused by people. Seemingly harmless things like outdoor grilling, dragging safety chains behind a trailer, welding and building campfires can accidentally start a dangerous wildfire. Use Caution when:

### **Burning debris**

- Obey all local burn bans and restrictions.
- Postpone burning when conditions are dry or windy.
- Establish wide control lines down to bare mineral soil.
- Never leave fire unattended.
- Keep water and hand tools nearby

*NOTE:* Escaped debris burning is the number one cause of wildfires in the State of Texas. Firefighters across the state cite inadequate fire breaks and failure to stay with outdoor fires as the two most common reasons for escaped fires.

Negligently allowing your fire to escape onto someone else's property is a Class C misdemeanor offense that is punishable by a fine up to \$500.

### **Welding/grinding/cutting**

Remove vegetation from the work area.

- Where vegetation cannot be removed, use a sprayer to wet down the work area prior to starting welding operations. Wet a wider area on the down-wind side from the welding location. If working in the same area for an extended period, re-wet the vegetation surrounding the work site.
- Keep water handy.
- Have someone with you to spot any fires that the sparks ignite so that they can be caught while small.
- Avoid parking vehicles in dry, tall grass.

*NOTE:* During extreme dry, hot and windy conditions, fire may appear to be out but will re-ignite when temperatures and wind increase. Be sure to stir and wet down areas of grass that have burned dowsing with plenty of water before leaving site.

### **Baling hay**

- Check bearing frequently and stop use if they get too hot.
- Remove any loose hay trapped around rollers-the friction can build up heat and start a fire.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and field sprayer nearby in case a fire breaks out.

*NOTE:* During extreme dry, hot and windy conditions, have someone with you to watch for smoking balers.

### **Using fireworks**

- Follow all county and city laws regarding fireworks use.
- Only use fireworks outdoors and away from dry grass and buildings.
- Read the labels and use only as directed, with adult supervision.
- Keep water, wet towels and a garden hose nearby.
- Allow fireworks to cool completely before handling, and discard used fireworks into a bucket of water.



# CENTRAL TEXAS WOODLANDS RESILIENCY

## **Using lawn equipment and motor vehicles**

- Keep mufflers and spark arresters on lawn care equipment in proper working order and watch out for rocks and metal when mowing
- Dragging chains can start a grass fire along the road without your knowledge. A small piece of hot metal rips off the chain when it comes in contact with the pavement. When in contact with dry vegetation it can ignite a wildfire. Check to make sure your chains are secure and short enough not to drag.

## **WAYS YOU CAN PREPARE YOUR HOME AND FAMILY FOR A WILDFIRE**

### **READY, SET, GO!**

#### **READY.**

Prepare for the possibility of a wildland fire before the threat occurs. Take preventive actions to make your home safer from the threat of wildfire by using Firewise and similar principles ([firewise.org](http://firewise.org)).

- Remove combustible materials from around your home. Keep grass mowed short.

#### **SET.**

Elevate your family's awareness when fire weather occurs or when wildland fire activity increases. Form a family disaster plan.

- Agree on an evacuation plan that includes what to do if you get separated and where you'll go in case of evacuation.
- Pack critical medicines, important documents, family heirlooms to be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

#### **GO.**

This is the simplest step: Execute your disaster plan by leaving early, well before the fire arrives.

- If instructed to evacuate, do so! Your "stuff" isn't more important than your LIFE.

Resources: [texasfirestorm.org](http://texasfirestorm.org) and [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).