

WILDFIRE PREVENTION OUTREACH TALKING POINTS

CURRENT FIRE SITUATION

- **Texas normally has two distinct fire seasons, dormant and growing.**
 - > **The dormant fire season** is generally characterized by freeze-cured grasses and increased wind speeds surrounding dry cold front passages with peak fire activity occurring mid-February through mid-April.
 - > **Last year's growing season**, occurring May through mid-August, featured above normal rainfall resulting in vigorous growth of grasses and forbs across much of West Texas, the Panhandle, Hill Country, and South Texas. This above normal grass production is expected to serve as the catalyst to increased fire activity during the 2022 dormant season as freeze-cured grasses are now present across the entire state after a hard freeze that occurred New Year's weekend.
- **285,000 acres burned between March 6 and April 6, 2022 from human-caused wildfires** (the equivalent of 1/2 the size of Dallas-Fort Worth).
 - > On the Kidd Fire, most of the town of Carbon, TX, (approximately 120 miles west of Dallas) was destroyed on March 17th including 142 structures with 83 of those being homes.
- **The recent brief periods of rain we have seen in some areas across the state will not have a notable effect on the significant levels of drought we are experiencing.**
 - > The state-wide wildfire activity this year is above normal and trending similarly to high wildfire risk years like 2006, 2008, 2009, and 2011.

WILDFIRE PREVENTION MESSAGING

- **More than 90 percent of all wildfires in Texas are human-caused and almost all are preventable.**
 - > The largest number of human-caused wildfires is a result of:
 - Careless debris burning
 - Dragging trailer chains
 - Parking on tall, dry grass
 - Sparks from welding, grinding equipment
- **Texas is 97% privately-owned so landowners can make the largest impact to prevent wildfires by: Debris burning**
 - Stay with your fire until it is out cold.
 - Delay burning if weather conditions are, or will be, hot, dry and windy.
 - Check with local officials, or online, for restrictions or burn bans.
 - Clear vegetation and other burnable material at least 10 feet from burn site.

Roadside Starts

- Avoid parking on tall, dry grass.
- Ensure trailer safety chains are secure so they do not come in contact with the roadway.
- Maintain trailer brakes and wheel bearings to avoid failure.
- Keep tires properly inflated and avoid tire failure to prevent driving on the wheel rims.

Equipment Use

- Have a spotter nearby with a water source or fire extinguisher.
- Avoid parking or idling in tall, dry grass.
- Check equipment frequently for trapped debris and check bearings for signs of overheating.
- Ensure your equipment is regularly maintained.