



DENTON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
Fire Marshal • Homeland Security • Emergency Management



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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Date: January 30, 2018

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Denton County Issues Mandatory Burn Ban

Denton County Judge Mary Horn today instated a Local Disaster Declaration for Threat of Wildland Fires Due to Dry Conditions in Denton County effective January 30, 2018.

Denton County Judge Mary Horn, in the interest of fire safety and fire prevention, is asking for the cooperation of all Denton County residents with respect to outdoor burning. High winds, low humidity, and dead/dormant vegetation have contributed to the risk of large and destructive wildfires. At risk are homes, valuable property, and lives. Denton County has experienced an increase in wildfires this season with several burning multiple acres. Some fires are the result of careless or negligent outdoor burning, some are the result of discarded burning materials or cigarettes, and other fires have been started by mechanical malfunctions and welding.

Denton County is experiencing dry weather with little chance for relief in the immediate future. Denton County is currently classified in moderate drought conditions according to the U.S. Drought Monitor Map and has seen a significant increase in frequency of wildfires. The Denton County burning ban will continue until drought conditions are alleviated.

The mandatory Burn Ban will eliminate all outdoor burning, include restrictions on outdoor hot work (welding and cutting torch operations), and the use of combustible materials. Violation of the County Judge Executive ordered burn-ban is a class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500.00.

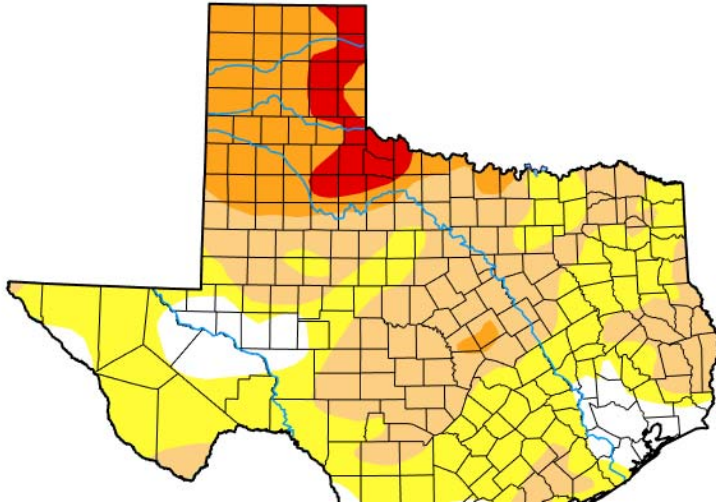
County Judge Mary Horn stated, "Prevention of potential wildland fires is essential to the safety of County residents. Wildfires can be devastating and difficult on everyone, especially farmers and ranchers; wildfires can destroy not only lives and property, but livelihood as well. With everyone's help we can make our communities a safer place to live and enjoy life."

Denton County Emergency Services Chief Jody Gonzalez stated, "Citizens should take measures to protect their home by removing unwanted combustible debris and vegetation away from their homes and be sure to keep water hoses ready accessible in the event a small fire starts. Always call 911 early to notify your fire department of any fire to assure a faster response and that complete extinguishment has occurred.

Texas

Map released: Thurs. January 25, 2018

Data valid: January 23, 2018 at 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)

Author(s):

[Richard Heim](#), NOAA/NCEI

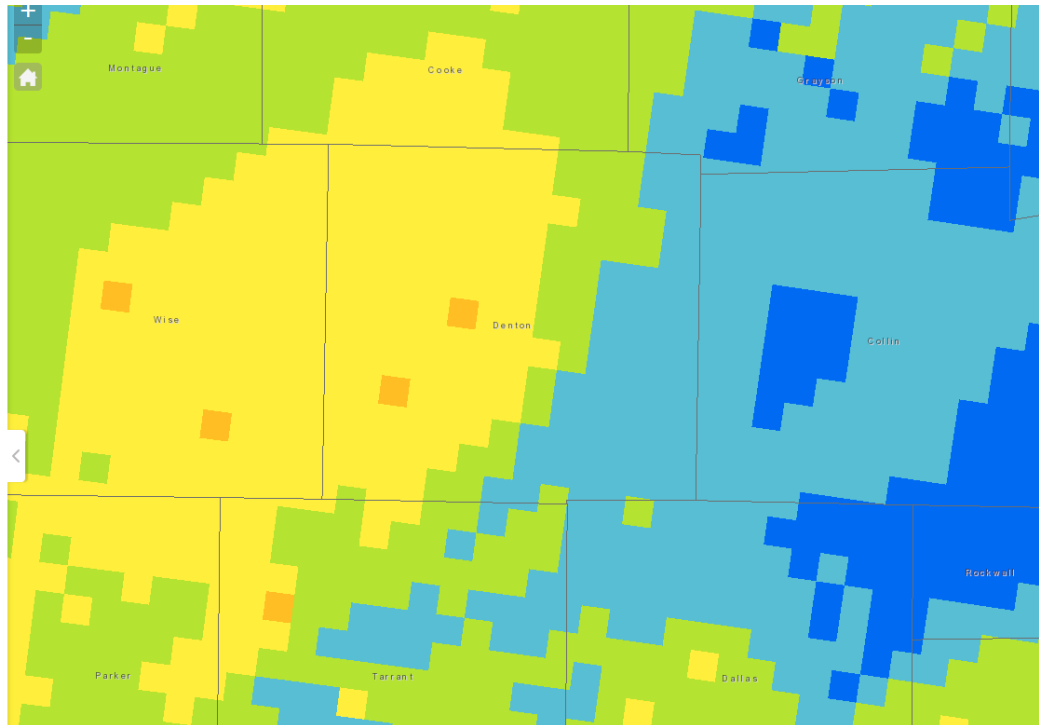
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. conditions may vary. See accompanying [text summary for statements.](#)

Current KBDI

Counties



- 0 - 200
- 200 - 300
- 300 - 400
- 400 - 500
- 500 - 600
- 600 - 700
- 700 - 800





DENTON COUNTY

County Judge Executive Order MH-01-18
January 30, 2018

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE DENTON COUNTY JUDGE

WHEREAS, the County Judge of Denton County has declared a state of disaster for Denton County, resulting from the potential threat of wildfires due to severe drought and adverse weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, such fires have the potential of endangering lives and damaging property on a large scale; and

WHEREAS, declaration of such disaster authorizes the imposition of controls on activities which tend to increase the likelihood of fires; and

WHEREAS, such controls, once implemented, have the potential of protecting lives and property by mitigating the threat of dangerous fires; and

WHEREAS, said state of disaster requires that certain emergency measures be taken pursuant to the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 relating to Emergency Management, specifically §418.108(a) of the Government Code and as authorized by 418.012;

NOW, THEREFORE, the following regulations governing outdoor burning and use of combustible products shall take effect immediately upon issuance of this order and shall remain in effect until the state of disaster is terminated by Denton County Commissioners Court or the Denton County Judge:

OUTDOOR BURNING (BURN BAN)

Burning or Use of a combustible material outdoors or knowingly and willingly allowing the use of a combustible material outdoors on private property or in any outdoor environment by any person is prohibited. Open burning of combustible material;

- Combustible materials include, but are not limited to; wood, lumber, leaves, brush, or other flammable materials, materials used in activities such as welding and other activity that could result in a fire.
- Knowingly or Recklessly discarding lighted or burning materials
- Exceptions to the burn ban may only be authorized by the Denton County Commissioners Court or County Judge
- Professional Fireworks displays using 1.3G fireworks will only be authorized by permit if conditions and locations are appropriate.
- This Ban/Order does **NOT** limit the authority granted under other state statutory regulations including reckless damage of property. Damage to property resulting from reckless conduct of outdoor burning or discharge of fireworks could result in further violations of Texas Statutes.

OUTDOOR COOKING

- All outdoor cooking or open flame device is prohibited
 - i. Unless the cooking device is propane or natural gas and has a complete and full enclosure that is utilized at all times.
 - ii. Unless the cooking device is wood or charcoal and has a complete and full enclosure that is utilized, and all areas around the cooking device shall be clear of vegetation and/or combustible materials or debris for a 5' radius

OPEN HOTWORK

Where welding must be performed in the field, the following mitigating efforts will be in force until the fire emergency declaration has expired.

- All areas where welding, cutting or grinding operations are being performed will be free of vegetation and/or combustibles for at least thirty feet in all directions;
- Winds speed must be no more than 20 miles per hour while performing welding, cutting or

- grinding operations outside of approved barriers or enclosures;
- Relative humidity must be above 25%
- Each site will have the ability to call 911 for emergency response;
- A dedicated fire watch person will attend each welder, cutter, grinder or any activity that causes a spark;
- A minimum of one (1) water pressure fire extinguisher or pressurized water source per fire watch person is required;
- If an emergency exists where welding has to be performed, the Fire Marshal may issue a temporary exception to the order.

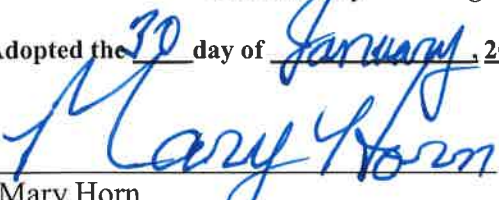
ENCLOSED HOTWORK

- All welding, cutting and grinding operations may be performed in a total welding enclosure, or “welding box”, that is sufficiently high to control sparks and includes a fire-retardant cover over the top.
- All areas where welding, cutting or grinding operations are being performed will be free of vegetation and/or combustibles for at least twenty feet in all directions;
- Winds speed must be no more than 22 miles per hour while performing welding, cutting or grinding operations;
- Relative humidity must be above 20%
- Each site will have the ability to call 911 for emergency response;
- A dedicated fire watch person will attend each welder, cutter, grinder or any activity that causes a spark;
- A minimum of one (1) water pressure fire extinguisher or pressurized water source per fire watch person is required;
- Where welding (above ground and sub-surface) is required in an area where there is a potential for a hazardous atmosphere, barriers will be substituted for total enclosures (e.g. “wind walls”) to prevent sparks from encountering any combustible material and/or vegetation
 - ii. The barriers will be installed to allow ventilation of the work area and ingress and egress to the work area for personnel safety;
 - iii. Sub-surface, or “bell hole”, welding and grinding operations within approved excavations are allowed if all other “enclosed” mitigation efforts are in compliance;
- If an emergency exists where welding must be performed, the Fire Marshal may issue a temporary exception to the order.

In accordance with Government Code 418.173, a person who knowingly or intentionally violates this order commits a Class C Misdemeanor, punishable by a fine up to \$500.00.

The purpose of this order is the mitigation of the public safety hazard posed by wildfires during the current drought and severe weather conditions by curtailing the use of all combustible materials.

Adopted the 30 day of January, 2018


 Mary Horn
 Denton County Judge

1-30-18
 Date


 County Clerk