



DAN A. GATTIS
COUNTY JUDGE

TERRY COOK
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 1

CYNTHIA LONG
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 2

VALERIE COVEY
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 3

LARRY MADSEN
COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 4

WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

COUNTY JUDGE

WILLIAMSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
710 MAIN STREET, SUITE 101
GEORGETOWN, TEXAS 78626
(512) 943-1550

ORDER DECLARING A LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

WHEREAS, the County of Williamson, Texas, due to dry vegetation, wind, and/or other weather related conditions, is experiencing the occurrence and imminent threat of widespread and severe damage, injury, and/or loss of life and property resulting from:

Wildfires, and in particular, wildfires caused by outdoor burning; and

WHEREAS, Section 418.004(1) of the *Texas Government Code* defines disaster to be the "occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or man-made cause, including fire, flood, earthquake, wind, storm, wave action, oil spill or other water contamination, volcanic activity, epidemic, air contamination, blight, drought, infestation, explosion, riot, hostile military or paramilitary action, other public calamity requiring emergency action, or energy emergency;" and

WHEREAS, the County Judge of Williamson County has determined, based on statements provided by Williamson County Office of Emergency Management personnel and other relevant information, that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate the suffering of people and to protect or rehabilitate property; and

WHEREAS, there has been no significant amount of precipitation in any area of Williamson County in the past twenty-four (24) hours and current weather predictions do not predict any significant amount of precipitation for the next five (5) days; and

WHEREAS, due to the disaster conditions as cited herein the County Judge of Williamson County **must protect the health, safety and welfare** of the County's citizens; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED and ORDERED pursuant to the authority granted in the Texas Disaster Act of Chapter 418 Texas Government Code, as follows:

1. That a local state of disaster is hereby declared for Williamson County pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the *Texas Government Code*;

2. Pursuant to Section 418.108(b) of the *Texas Government Code*, this Declaration and Order shall continue for a period of seven (7) days from the date hereof unless extended by the consent of the Williamson County Commissioners Court;
3. Pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the *Texas Government Code*, this Declaration and Order activates the recovery and rehabilitation aspects of the Williamson County Emergency Management Plan and authorizes the furnishing of aid and assistance under this Declaration and Order. The preparedness and response aspects of the Williamson County Emergency Management Plan are hereby activated and shall take effect immediately upon this Declaration and Order;
4. Pursuant to Section 418.108(c) of the *Texas Government Code*, this Declaration and Order shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the County Clerk of Williamson County;
5. Except as otherwise stated herein, the burning of any combustible material outside of an enclosure which serves to contain all flames and/or sparks or the engaging in activity outdoors which could allow flames or sparks that could result in a fire **SHALL BE PROHIBITED** in Williamson County, Texas;
6. This Declaration and Order **SHALL NOT PROHIBIT** the following outdoor burning activities **provided they are conducted when Red Flag Conditions do not exist:**
 - a. use of an outdoor cooking apparatus that is fully contained in a fire enclosure which is designed to prevent any spread of fire, coals, embers and/or sparks;
 - b. burning activities related to public health and safety that are authorized by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for:
 - (a) firefighter training;
 - (b) public utility, natural gas pipeline, or mining operations; or
 - (c) planting or harvesting of agriculture crops.
 - c. burning activities that are conducted by a prescribed burn manager certified under Section 153.048, Natural Resources Code, and meet the standards of Section 153.047, Natural Resources Code.
 - d. burning activities that involve the performance of outdoor combustible operations, including but not limited to, outdoor welding, cutting or grinding operations and outdoor hot works operations, by any person if the operations are performed in compliance with the following requirements creating a controlled environment and safeguards on each day when operations are performed:

- i. Areas where welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations are being performed are free of vegetation for at least twenty-five feet in all directions;
- ii. Surfaces around welding or hot works area are wetted down;
- iii. Each location where welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations are being performed must have cellular telephone communications for emergency response;
- iv. Before beginning any operations, the person performing the welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations must notify the local fire department or Emergency Services District which serves the location where the welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations are planned;
- v. A dedicated fire watch person attends each welder, cutter, grinder, or worker performing hot works operations or any activity that causes a spark;
- vi. At least one (1) water pressure fire extinguisher per fire watch person is located within 10 feet of the location where welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations are being performed;
- vii. No welding, cutting or grinding operations or hot works operations is allowed on days designated as red flag warning days by the National Weather Service or when Red Flag Conditions exist;
- viii. If all welding, cutting and grinding operations or hot works operations are performed only in a total welding or hot works enclosure, or "welding box" or "hot works box", that is sufficiently high to control sparks, including a fire retardant cover over the top, the operations must comply with the above requirements (v.), (vi.), and (vii.) in this list and is encouraged to comply with requirements (i.)-(iv.) inclusive, if feasible and appropriate, and;
- ix. If all welding, cutting and grinding operations or hot works operations are performed only in sub-surface, or "bell hole", welding and grinding operations or hot works operations within approved excavations, the operations must comply with the above requirements (v.), (vi.), and (vii.) in this list and is encouraged to comply with requirements (i.)-(iv.) inclusive, if feasible and appropriate.

7. For purposes of this Declaration and Order, Red Flag Conditions exist when there is:



- a. Sustained wind average 15 mph or greater;
- b. Relative humidity less than or equal to 25 percent; and
- c. A temperature of greater than 75 degrees F.

8. A violation of this Declaration and Order is punishable as a Class C misdemeanor by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or as authorized by Section 418.173 of the *Texas Government Code* and adopted in Williamson County's Emergency Management Plan by a fine that does not exceed \$1,000.00 and confinement in jail for a term not to exceed 180 days, whichever is greater;
9. In the event the existing dry conditions diminish between now and the end of the effective date of this Declaration and Order, the County Judge shall reevaluate this Declaration and Order at that time.

This Declaration and Order is adopted this 20th day of July 2018 at 2:30 p.m., effective immediately.



Dan A. Gattis
Williamson County Judge

FILED
at 4:30 o'clock PM
JUL 20 2018 

County Clerk, Williamson Co., TX