



# Bexar County Fire Marshal

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## **Bexar County Commissioners Court Approves Burn Ban**

This morning, Bexar County Commissioners Court approved a ban on outdoor burning in unincorporated Bexar County that goes into effect immediately.

“Since January 2018, there have been over 300 grass fires in the Bexar County area. Of those, more than 58 have occurred since May 1, 2018. The worsening conditions have created an urgent need for this. I advise all residents to be diligent and remove any fuel sources for grass fires such as dry brush piles”, stated Bexar County Fire Marshal Chris Lopez.

He noted tall grasses, heavy fuel loads, changeable temperatures, high wind speeds, and humid conditions as the primary environmental factors that necessitated the ban.

Additionally, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index, an indicator of fire potential on a scale of 0 to 800 with the highest range representing the driest conditions has consistently shown high readings for Bexar County, with the current reading of up to 606, in certain areas of Bexar County. The usual range for Bexar County is from 436 to 655.

Under the ban, residents are restricted to burning household waste in burn barrels with metal wire mesh screens that prevent the spread of sparks and flames. This is the sole scenario in which domestic burning will be allowed. The order prohibits all other outdoor burning unless authorized by the County Fire Marshal, or burning for firefighting training; public utility, natural gas pipeline and mining operations; or harvesting of agricultural crops.

A violation of the burn ban is a Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500, and is hereby effective beginning June 19<sup>th</sup> with a lifespan of 90 days, or until Bexar County Commissioners’ Court or Fire Marshal’s Office determines that a public safety hazard no longer exists.

For more information on wildfire risk and outdoor burning guidelines, please visit <https://www.bexar.org/630/Fire-Marshal>.

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