



Bexar County Public Information Office
San Antonio, Texas 78205-3036

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**County Judge Issues Disaster Declaration
to Address Dangerous Fire Conditions**

On Tuesday, April 12, 2022, Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff issued a disaster declaration effective immediately to address the ongoing, dangerous fire conditions in our county. In consultation with the Bexar County Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Coordinator Chris Lopez, it was decided to take this extra step to enhance protection for residents and their properties.

Fire Marshal Chris Lopez said, "In order to issue a burn ban, we have to reach a specific drought level index. Once that condition is met, we have to present the burn ban proclamation to Commissioners Court for approval." In recognition of the recent spike in wildfires and the ongoing environmental conditions, he added, "We came to recognize that appeals and recommendations are no longer enough."

Bexar County has not had significant rainfall for an extended period and weather forecasters expect little change for the near future. The magnitude of potential damage and the rapid spread of brush fires in recent weeks here and in neighboring counties has only amplified the need for more assertive action.

Judge Wolff addressed the potential for major disaster saying, "We cannot sit idly by and hope that everybody does their part. With conditions like this, we had to step in and do everything within our means to minimize the fire danger."

The declaration includes a ban on the practice of outdoor burning. The declaration and ban will stay in effect through April 19, 2022, which is the next scheduled meeting for the Bexar County Commissioners Court. The Fire Marshal will recommend to the full Commissioners Court to enact a burn ban at that time.

Violations of the disaster declaration and its stipulations is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.

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**BEXAR COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL
AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE**
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CHRIS LOPEZ
Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Coordinator

DECLARATION OF LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER

Bexar County, Texas is in a drought condition as documented by the National Weather Service. The U.S. Weather Monitor currently indicates that Bexar County is experiencing exceptional or extreme drought and no significant precipitation is anticipated in the near future. Moreover, high temperatures and low humidity are predicted to continue through June 30, 2022.

Section 352.081 of the Texas Local Government Code authorizes the Commissioners Court to restrict outdoor burning when drought conditions exist and, pursuant to that authority, Bexar County Commissioner's Court will consider enacting a burn ban on April 19, 2022.

Section 418.108 of the Texas Government Code authorizes the County Judge to declare a state of local disaster for "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..."

Pursuant to the authority granted in Section 418.108 of the Texas Government Code; the Commissioners Court Order adopted on January 25, 1985, vol. 170 pages 969-973; and the Emergency Management Plan adopted pursuant to that Order,

Nelson W. Wolff, the County Judge of Bexar County, Texas:

WHEREAS, the Judge of the County of Bexar has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate the suffering of people and to protect or rehabilitate property;

WHEREAS, Bexar County has not had significant rainfall for an extended period and weather forecasters offer little promise of a change in these dry conditions in the near future; and

WHEREAS, these dry conditions pose the threat of large, dangerous and fast-moving wildfires; and

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

WHEREAS, the Texas Disaster Act of 1975 authorized declaration of a state of disaster "if the threat of disaster is imminent"; and

WHEREAS, the magnitude of the potential damage and the rapidity at which such a fire could escalate to major proportions constitute an imminent threat of disaster; and

WHEREAS, declaration of such disaster authorized 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;

BE IT THEREFORE PROCLAIMED, that I Nelson W. Wolff, County Judge of Bexar County, do hereby declare a state of disaster based on the threat of large wildfires in Bexar County, Texas; and

BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that this state of disaster will continue until rescinded in accordance with the above statute and order, but in no instance will this declaration continue for more than seven days without authorization by the Bexar County Commissioners Court;

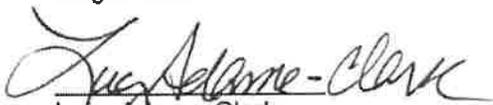
BE IT ALSO PROCLAIMED that this Oder declaring a state of disaster is being declared solely for the purpose of implementing controls aimed at mitigating the hazard posed by wildfires during the current hot, dry weather and shall not supersede any currently issued executive orders, including EXECUTIVE ORDER NW-21 OF BEXAR COUNTY JUDGE NELSON W. WOLFF ISSUED August 10, 2021.

BE IT ALSO ORDERED THAT the purpose of this order is the mitigation of the hazard posed by wildfires by curtailing the practice of outdoor burning, which purpose is to be taken into account in any enforcement action based upon this order and that this proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance for the period set forth herein.

ORDERED this the 12th day of April, 2022.

A violation of this Order is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1000.00.

This Declaration and Order is issued this 12th day of April, and is effective from 12:00p.m. April 12, 2022 through 12:00 p.m. on April 19, 2022 at which time, the Bexar County Commissioners Court will be requested to enact a County Wide Burn Ban on April 19, 2022 until such time as the drought conditions no longer exist.


Lucy Adame-Clark
Bexar County Clerk


Nelson W. Wolff
Bexar County Judge

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