

Fire danger is a measure of the relative seriousness of burning conditions and threat of fire. The **National Fire Danger Rating System** (PDF, 250KB) is applied to reflect the general conditions of either current or future fire situations. Conditions of wildland fuels are observed and used to calculate and predict fire potential.

Fire danger is usually expressed as low, moderate, high, very high and extreme. Fire danger ratings are generated from data collected daily at remote automated weather stations located across the state. The collected data is then entered into the national fire danger rating system processor. The NFDRS processor will then generate a number of outputs including the fire danger rating.

For more detailed fire danger products, please visit the **TICC - Predictive Service**.

<https://www.texaswildfirerisk.com/map>

People and their activities cause more than 90 percent of all wildfires in Texas. The largest number of human-caused wildfires is a result of careless debris burning. Other causes of wildfires include sparks from welding and grinding equipment, carelessly discarded smoking materials, vehicles' exhaust systems and arson.

DEBRIS BURNING

Compliance with burn bans reduces unsafe debris burning; but a burn ban does not have to be in effect for outdoor burning to be illegal.

Negligently allowing your fire to escape onto someone else's property is a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a fine up to \$500.

Tips to safer debris burning:

- Check for **local bans on outdoor burning**.
- Keep informed of **wildfire danger levels**.
- Avoid burning trash, leaves and brush on dry, windy days.
- Check to see if weather changes are expected. Postpone outdoor burning if shifts in wind direction, high winds or wind gusts are in the forecast.
- Before doing any burning, establish wide control lines down to bare mineral soil at least five feet wide around any burn barrels and even wider around brush piles and other piled debris to be burned. The larger the debris pile, the wider the control line needed to ensure burning materials won't be blown or roll off the pile into vegetation outside the line.
- Burn household trash only in a burn barrel or other trash container equipped with a screen or metal grid to keep burning material contained.
- Never attempt to burn aerosol cans; heated cans will explode. Flying material may cause injuries and the explosion may scatter burning material into nearby vegetation and cause a wildfire.
- Stay with outdoor fires until they are completely out.
- Keep water and hand tools ready in case your fire should attempt to spread.

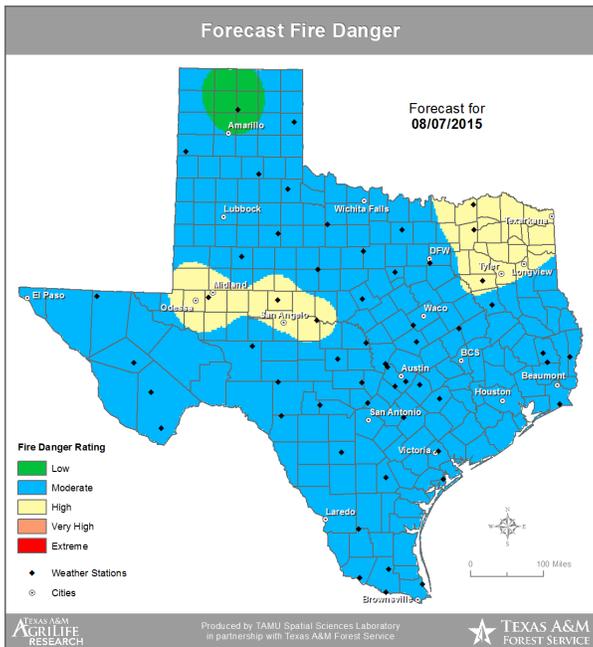
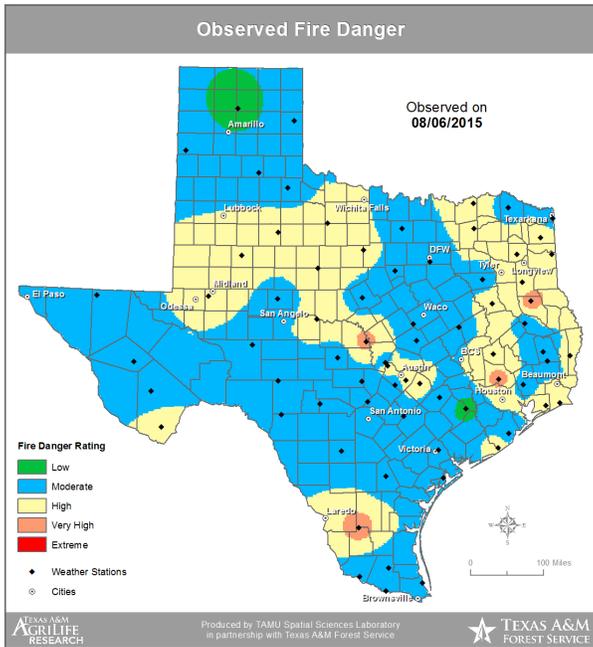
The expanding threat of wildfires to Texas communities is a result of the state's ever changing land use, climate and population. Many Texas communities are within or are growing into the Wildland Urban Interface. The WUI is an area where flammable homes are mixed with flammable vegetation.

Community leaders such as city managers/planners, fire chiefs, emergency management coordinators and home owner associations, with the assistance of a local Texas A&M Forest Service **WUI Specialist**, can implement community wildfire preparedness plans and programs to help your community withstand the next wildfire event.

Wildfires do not need to be tens of thousands of acres to threaten your community. A wildfire of 100 acres or less can be just as destructive as a large wildfire. The Steiner Ranch Fire (2011) was only 125 acres, but destroyed 20 homes in Travis County.

Fortunately, your local **TFS WUI Specialist** can work with your community to establish a suitable **Community Wildfire Protection Plan** (PDF, 22MB) or implement wildfire preparedness programs like "**Ready, Set, Go!**" and **Firewise Communities**.

WUI Specialists can also help train community leaders to complete wildfire risk assessments and use the **Texas Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal** to reach a community's wildfire preparedness goals.



Using this information, daily and seasonal forecasts of fire danger are made to assist state and local governments in preparing for and responding to periods of elevated fire danger or fire seasons.

Through our **Predictive Services** department, Texas A&M Forest Service staff work on assessing and monitoring Texas wildfires.