

## STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

### 24.01.01.M7.03 Safe Use of Outdoor Fires

*Approved July 18, 2006*

*Revised November 12, 2009*

*Revised April 17, 2013*

*Revised October 7, 2018*

*Revised February 13, 2025*

*Next scheduled review: February 13, 2030*

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### Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

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Protection of personnel, property, and the environment is a high priority at Texas A&M University and will be enhanced by the following safety procedures when using outdoor fires for cooking, heating, brush disposal, land clearing, or recreational purposes. Procedures for the use of outdoor fires apply to all faculty, staff, students, and visitors working on, or visiting Texas A&M University, its additional locations, and the Texas A&M RELLIS campus.

This procedure does not apply to fires/flames associated with accepted maintenance measures, construction practices, or the use of flame effects or pyrotechnics for entertainment, exhibition, demonstration, or simulation before an audience or other exclusions specifically stated in this procedure or [University Rule 24.01.01.M7, Fire and Life Safety Compliance](#).

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### Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

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#### 1. CONTROLLED BURNING OR LAND CLEARING

- 1.1 Texas A&M University must comply with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulations for controlled burning of brush or land clearing.
- 1.2 Authorization for open burning of brush or land clearing must be obtained through Texas A&M University Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). Request to burn must be submitted [online](#) to EHS. If a request to burn is approved, an "Open and Prescribed Burn Permit" will be issued to the responsible party by EHS. For further information or assistance, contact EHS at 979-845-2132 or emailing [firemarshal@tamu.edu](mailto:firemarshal@tamu.edu).

- 1.3 EHS will provide notification of the Open and Prescribed Burn Permit to the appropriate local fire department, the Texas A&M University Customer Services Center, and the University Police.
- 1.4 The responsible party shall notify the appropriate fire department, the Texas A&M University Customer Service Center and the University Police as well as contacting any other entities that may be affected by the burn prior to initiating the burn each day.
- 1.5 All burns shall comply with the following general requirements:
  - 1.5.1 All reasonable safety measures will be followed.
  - 1.5.2 Only natural ground cover, brush, trees, etc. may be burned. It is not acceptable to store items for burning at a later date. Open burning may be used as a way to remove brush and other acceptable items only if no alternative removal can be used.
  - 1.5.3 Responsible persons must be present during the entire burn, be equipped with adequate fire fighting agents, and be able to quickly communicate with emergency personnel.
  - 1.5.4 Burning shall be commenced and conducted only when the wind direction and other meteorological conditions are such that smoke and other pollutants will not cause adverse effects to any public road, landing strip, navigable water, or off-site structure containing sensitive receptor(s).
  - 1.5.5 If at any time the burning causes or may tend to cause smoke to blow onto or across road or highway, it is the responsibility of the person initiating the burn to post flag-persons on affected roads.
  - 1.5.6 Burning must be conducted downwind or at least 300 feet (90 meters) from any structure containing sensitive receptors located on adjacent properties unless prior written approval is obtained from the occupant with possessory control.
  - 1.5.7 Burning shall be conducted in compliance with the following meteorological and timing considerations:
    - a) The initiating of burning shall be no earlier than one hour after sunrise. Burning shall be completed on the same day not later than one hour before sunset, and shall be attended by a responsible party at all times during the active burn phase when the fire is progressing. In cases where residual fires and/or smoldering objects continue to emit smoke after this time, such areas shall be extinguished if the smoke from these areas has the potential to create a nuisance or traffic hazard condition. In no case shall the extent of the burn area be allowed to increase after this time.

- b) Burning shall not be commenced when surface wind speed is predicted to be less than six miles per hour (mph) (five knots) or greater than 23 mph (20 knots) during the burn period.
  - c) Burning shall not be conducted during periods of actual or predicted persistent low-level atmospheric temperature inversions.
- 1.5.8 Electric insulation, lumber, plastics, non-wood construction/ demolition, heavy oils, asphaltic materials, potentially explosive materials, chemical waste, and items containing natural or synthetic rubber shall not be burned.
- 1.5.9 Burning shall immediately cease at such time that the County issues a burn ban.

## 2. COOKING FIRES, CAMP FIRES AND OTHER

- 2.1 Camp fires or other fires used for warmth or cooking are not allowed on campus except:
- a) Where outdoor grills are provided by the University for such activities,
  - b) For University-approved special events,
  - c) As specifically authorized, in writing, by the Assistant Vice President, Environmental Health and Safety or designee,
  - d) The use of personal grills, outdoor fireplaces, and chimeneas as allowed by Residence Life for students living in campus housing (Regulations for the use of grills in or near Residence Life Facilities are governed by separate rules as set forth by the Division of Student Affairs), or
  - e) Private “tailgate” activities associated with athletic events using private outdoor grills.
- 2.2 This procedure does not apply to fires/flames associated with accepted training, maintenance or construction practices; to university approved special events; to residents’ (of university-owned apartments) uses of grills outside their apartments; or to reasonable tailgating activities associated with university-sponsored sporting events.
- 2.3 All approved outdoor fires, including bar-b-que grills, must be supervised and must never be left unattended while burning. Approved wood and charcoal fires must be thoroughly extinguished with water before being left unattended and the extinguished wood/coals must be disposed of in a proper receptacle. Never place hot wood/coals in a trash receptacle or dumpster.
- 2.4 Location of bar-b-que grills and campfires must be at least ten (10) feet from combustible construction and a safe distance from vehicles to prevent fires and/or damage to facilities or vehicles. Special attention must be given during the initial

fire startup because of the flames that may be generated. Bar-b-que grills shall not to be used inside campus buildings.

- 2.5 Liquid Petroleum (LP) gas containers and equipment use must conform to the manufacturer's specifications. LP gas grills with the gas container attached and portable LP gas containers for grills shall not be stored in campus buildings.

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## **Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements**

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[System Policy 34.01, \*Environment, Safety and Security\*](#)

[System Regulation 34.01.01, \*Health and Safety Programs\*](#)

[University Rule 24.01.01.M7, \*Fire and Life Safety Compliance\*](#)

[EHS Outdoor/Open/Prescribed Burn Guidelines](#)

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## **Contact Office**

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[Environmental Health and Safety](#)

(979) 845-2132

ehs@tamu.edu