

## Process for Getting a Prescribed Burn on Your Place as a Member of SCTPBA

For those of you who may not have burned on your place yet, here is a list of the steps you need to take to get ready.

- Discuss your plans with one of our qualified burn plan reviewers. That person will visit with you to inspect your site.
- If you have not already done so, talk to your TPWD biologist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent or NRCS agent about your rationale for conducting a prescribed burn. They can advise you if burning would help to accomplish your objectives.
- Identify the area to be burned so a suitable map can be made. Usually this step uses Google Earth. If you can provide a Google Earth picture with the property outlined, that will help. If not, then work with whoever is helping you to get a map.
- Identify firebreaks needed and any special smoke sensitive issues.
- Make sure you have suitable insurance. This is likely going to mean Texas Farm Bureau.
- Start early in the year preparing firebreaks. Keep weeds and grasses mowed or shredded during the summer to allow for more effective disking in the fall for winter burns. Start disking as early as you can to ensure adequate soil firebreaks. Live vegetation (such as food plots) can be effective firebreaks.
- Leave room outside the firebreak for passage of vehicles and volunteers, especially on the downwind side. An alternative is to make your firebreak wide enough so that it will accommodate personnel and vehicles without excessive heat.
- Make a first pass at completing the burn plan using the standard template. When you have done what you can do, work with the individual who will be reviewing your plan to complete the rest. Try to do as much and learn as much as you can.
- Complete the burn plan and submit it.
- Prior to the burn, clear out limbs, debris, leaves, or any fuel around trees or structures that you want to save. Special efforts will be required if the trees are hollow and have holes near the bottom.
- Remove any standing dead trees. It is much easier and safer to take down a dead tree before the burn than it is after it is ignited. In wooded areas, this can be a large job. Do not wait until a week before the planned burn to start working on it.
- It is better to burn brush piles prior to the prescribed burn. Brush piles can last for days and require considerable mop-up effort.
- When the burn plan is received and the preparations are complete, begin watching for the right weather forecast. When you see a suitable target day, contact an officer or board member to get the word out to our members to solicit assistance with your burn.
- The landowner will be the Burn Boss of record.
- On the day of the burn provide amenities consistent with how long the volunteers will be there. If the burn will take all day, then lunch should be provided. If it is short and can be done in the afternoon, then water, drinks, and some snacks are sufficient.
- Get a list of all volunteers who attend
- Make the calls to the neighbors and the agencies on the morning of the burn to notify them that the burn is about to start.
- During the burn, stay in communication with the volunteers by radio or physical presence if requested.

- After the burn, take charge of mop-up operations unless the situation dictates greater expertise than the landowner has. The landowner may need to rent equipment or hire workers to effectively complete the mop-up if it takes several days.
- Notify dispatch and any others required when the fire is complete.
- Complete and file the “after burn” report.

In summary, if you are just beginning to plan for a burn, your next steps are:

- Ask your TPWD biologist, Texas AgriLife Extension agent or NRCS agent whether a burn will help you accomplish your management objectives.
- Have someone from SCTPBA visit your property and discuss plans in general.
- Work on your firebreaks.
- Get your plans prepared and reviewed.
- Keep watching the webinars and attending training sessions.
- Wait on the right weather for your burn and be ready to go!