

Montgomery County Fire
Marshal's Office
2247 N. First
Suite 200
Conroe, Tx 77301

For Details, Contact Jimmy Williams
Fire Marshal
Phone (936) 538-8288
Fax # (936) 538-8277
Email: jimmyw@co.montgomery.tx.us

MCFMO Press Release

For Release July 2nd, 2013

Outdoor Burn Ban and Fireworks Restrictions Enacted in Montgomery County

*Spike in area drought indexes increases fire danger in
heavily populated communities adjacent to wildland areas.*

Conroe, Tx July 2nd, 2013

Montgomery County has issued a "Declaration of Local Disaster", effective immediately, in response to the growing threat of wildfire throughout the County. Montgomery County is home to one of the largest populations of Texans living in an Urban/Wildland Interface zone, with nearly 500,000 residents living in unincorporated portions of the County. An Urban/Wildland Interface zone is an area where communities lie directly adjacent to forests or grasslands. The large numbers of residents living in close proximity to wildlands and forest areas places Montgomery County at a higher risk for destructive wildfires

In the past few days, the average Keetch-Byram Drought Index for Montgomery County has soared from just 539 last Friday to 601 today. While this is an average reading, some areas are experiencing much worse drought conditions, with parts of south and west Montgomery County at 693 on the Keetch-Byram Drought Index. Recent high temperatures, followed by several days of low humidity, have created near perfect conditions for wildfires and the number of fires has steadily increased over the past few days. In the past 60 hours, Montgomery County Firefighters have responded to over 3 dozen wildfires, with some causing damage to outbuildings and other small structures.

These fires included:

- 8 wildfires where the 911 caller reported that fireworks were involved
- 9 wildfires started from outdoor burning of brush or leaves
- 6 illegal burns (trash fires)
- 15 Grass/Woods fires where the cause has not been determined at this time.

In response to these fires and the imminent threat of a disastrous wildfire, County Judge Alan B. Sadler has issued a Local Disaster Declaration restricting the use of two types of fireworks, “skyrockets with sticks” and “missiles with fins”. These two types of fireworks can fly outside of the control of the user and land indiscriminately. All other consumer fireworks will remain legal for use, however the Montgomery County Fire Marshal’s Office recommends caution should you choose to set off consumer fireworks.

In addition to the fireworks restrictions, a burn ban has been issued for all of Montgomery County. Under the outdoor burn ban, all burning is prohibited in unincorporated Montgomery County until further notice. Violation of the Outdoor Burn Ban is a class C Misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$500.

The following is the NFPA recommendation on fireworks safety. Access the NFPA at NFPA.org or contact the MCFMO for more information.

Fireworks

Fireworks lead to thousands of injuries requiring emergency room treatment, according to NFPA. These dazzling, but dangerous devices can burn up to 1200 F and can cause burns, lacerations, amputations and blindness. **Stay safe by always leaving fireworks to professionals.**

- Stay back at least 500 feet from professional fireworks displays.
- Treat all fireworks, whether legal or illegal for consumers, as suitable only for use by trained professionals.
- If you find fireworks, do not touch them but instead direct authorities to them.
- Leave any area where amateurs are using fireworks.

Fireworks Restrictions
IN EFFECT IN THIS COUNTY

Restricted Fireworks are:

- **Sky rockets with sticks**



- **Devices with fins or rudders**



*for the purpose of achieving aerodynamic flight
(including missiles or rockets)*

**The Use of these Fireworks
Are Prohibited for this Season.**

Fireworks Restrictions