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HILL COUNTY, TEXAS  
2024 OCT 15 PM 1:25

**Justin W. Lewis**

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**HILL COUNTY JUDGE**

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**DECLARATION OF DISASTER AND ORDER PROHIBITING OUTDOOR  
BURNING FOR HILL COUNTY, TEXAS**

**WHEREAS**, the County Judge of Hill County, on this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2024, has determined that Hill County, has been affected by recent wildland fires and continues to be threatened by high or extreme wildland fire hazard. This threat is caused by abundant fuel and extreme dry and windy conditions across the State of Texas and in particular Hill County, and;

**WHEREAS**, there has been in excess of thirty five wildland fires so far in the month of October, and;

**WHEREAS**, the County Judge of Hill County has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to alleviate the suffering of people and to protect property,

**NOW THEREFORE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE HILL COUNTY JUDGE AND THE HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COURT BY SECTION 418.108 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, I DO HEREBY PROCLAIM THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH DISASTER AND DIRECT THAT ALL NECESSARY MEASURES BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AS AUTHORIZED BY THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS BE IMPLEMENTED TO MEET THAT DISASTER:**

1. That a local state of disaster is hereby proclaimed for Hill County pursuant to Section 418.108 (a) of the Texas Government Code.
2. Pursuant to Section 418.108 (b) of the Government Code, this Declaration of a local state of disaster shall continue for so long as such conditions exist with the exception granted to fireworks under Section 418.108 (i) of the Government Code unless ratified and extended by the Governor of the State of Texas.
3. Pursuant to Section 418.108 (c) of the Government Code, this Declaration of a local state of disaster shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the County Clerk of Hill County.
4. Pursuant to Section 418.108 (d) of the Government Code, this Declaration of a local state of disaster activates the Hill County Emergency Management Plan.

5. 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.

BE IT THEREFORE ORDERED that the following emergency regulations are hereby established for all unincorporated areas of Hill County, Texas for the duration of the declaration;

(1) Actions Prohibited:

- (a) All outdoor burning of any combustible material is prohibited. A person violates this order if he burns any combustible material or orders such burning by others. This Order does not prohibit cooking stoves fueled by “white gasoline” or outdoor cooking grills fueled by propane or natural gas. This Order does not prohibit outdoor cooking events that are continuously monitored and overseen by fire department personnel and equipment capable of extinguishing any fire that may result from such activities

For purposes of this Order, **the term “Outdoor Burning” means:**

- a. All outdoor fires, including fires contained in a container or semi-enclosure, such as a barrel or hopper. (It does not include grills, barbeques, or smokers which are used to cook food and attended.) : AND
- b. The use of welders or cutting torches is prohibited unless the user has on hand adequate fire suppression equipment and personnel, specifically, this must include, as a minimum:
- i. a 2A-20BC fire extinguisher, kept within 30 feet of any outdoor welding activity: AND
  - ii. an individual to serve as a “fire monitor” during all welding activities with the monitor remaining on scene for a minimum of 30 minutes after cessation of any outdoor welding activity.

**This Declaration and Order shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance and continue for a period of seven (7) days, unless ratified by the Hill County Commissioners Court, with the exception granted to fireworks under Section 418.108 (i) of the Government Code unless ratified and extended by the Governor of the State of Texas. A violation of this order is a Class C misdemeanor.**

DECLARED AND ORDERED THIS THE 15<sup>th</sup> DAY OF October 2024.

  
Hon. Justin W. Lewis, County Judge