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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORT BEND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT ISSUES BURN BAN

Drought Index Expected to Reach Over 700 by the Weekend

(FORT BEND, TX) – Today, during a special called emergency meeting, Fort Bend County Commissioners Court approved an outdoor burn ban for unincorporated areas of Fort Bend County.

Due to drought conditions and the high risk of fire dangers, the ban limits the use of open flames which includes the burning of trash, campfires, burn barrels, and other open flame devices, that can ignite combustible materials and result in personal injury, property damage, and loss of life.

“With the passing of the burn ban, I would ask that our Fort Bend County residents also exercise extreme caution with the use of fireworks as they celebrate over the 4th of July weekend,” stated Judge KP George. “Because of the extremely dry conditions, we don’t want to risk the safety of our resident and their property. Additionally, we don’t want to over-extend our fire and emergency medical service personnel due to a high number of preventable emergency calls.”

Fort Bend County is currently experiencing drought conditions due to extreme record-setting high temperatures. Based on the Fort Bend County Fire Marshal’s findings, and in alignment with The Keetch-Byram Drought Index, the commissioners' court came to a consensus that circumstances present in the county can potentially create a public safety hazard.

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index is used in determining forest fire potential. The drought index is based on a daily water balance, where a drought factor is balanced with precipitation and soil moisture measurements. The drought index ranges from 0 to 800, where a drought index of 0 represents no moisture depletion, and an index of 800 represents absolutely dry conditions. Currently, Fort Bend County’s index is at 665. It is predicted to be over 700 by the weekend.



County Judge KP George is authorized to sign an order rescinding this Declaration and Order if he determines, upon consultation with the County Fire Marshal, that drought conditions or hazardous circumstances no longer exist.

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