



## Texas Division of Emergency Management State Situation Report

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### New Information in Blue Text

<b>Event Name</b>	<b>24-0001 Wildfire Season 2024</b>
<b>Date</b>	March 20, 2024
<b>Time</b>	10:00 AM
<b>Operational Period</b>	8:00 AM March 19 to 8:00 AM March 20, 2024
<b>Report Number</b>	21

<b>TDEM Regions Affected</b>	1
<b>DDs Active</b>	None

### STATEWIDE CURRENT SITUATION:

State emergency response resources are prepared to respond and support local officials.

On March 13, Governor Abbott announced that the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved his request for disaster declarations in Texas communities affected by wildfires in the Panhandle. Texas counties included in the declarations are Armstrong, Carson, Donley, Gray, Hansford, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, and Wheeler.

The SBA has granted access to its Home Disaster Loans, Business Physical Disaster Loans, and Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, which will provide low-interest loans to qualifying homeowners, renters, and businesses in affected communities following the Smokehouse Creek Fire and the Windy Deuce Fire.

SBA representatives will open two Disaster Loan Outreach Centers to explain the application process, assist with completing applications, and address questions about the disaster loan programs.

Starting March 14, a Disaster Loan Outreach Center will be located at the Hemphill County Courthouse at 400 Main St. in Canadian, TX 79014, which will be open from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays.

Starting March 14, a Disaster Loan Outreach Center will be located at The Dome Civic Center & Convention Center at 1113 Bulldog Blvd. in Borger, TX 79007, which will be open weekdays from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. and from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Saturdays.

### **OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES:**

1. Protect life and property.
2. Support rapid & effective response.
3. Collect and disseminate accurate incident information to improve decision-making.
4. Accurately track incident costs associated with assigned resources for cost recovery.

### **Region 1 (Includes DDs 1, 2, and 7)**

Disaster District (DD) 1 – Amarillo (Includes Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, and Wheeler Counties)

**Carson County:** A disaster declaration was issued for the entire county by the County Judge on February 28.

**Childress County:** Evacuated livestock are being housed at the Mashburn Event Center.

**Gray County:** Gray County issued a disaster declaration on February 28. County officials submitted a Disaster Summary Outline to TDEM on March 1.

The Grapevine Creek Fire has burned 34,883 acres and is 100% contained.

**Hemphill County:** Hemphill County submitted a Disaster Summary Outline to TDEM on March 3. Hemphill County issued a disaster declaration extension on March 17.

**Hutchinson County:** The County Judge issued a disaster declaration on February 27, a Disaster Summary Outline on March 1, an update submitted on March 2, a disaster declaration continuation, and Letter to the Governor on March 4. A request for a Fire Management Assistant Grant (FMAG) was submitted and approved by FEMA on February 27 for the Smokehouse Creek Fire (FM-5488-TX).

The 687 Reamer Fire burned 2,000 acres before joining the Smokehouse Creek Fire. 14 homes and seven outbuildings were lost.

The Smokehouse Creek Fire has burned 1,078,638 acres with 100% containment.

**Moore County:** A request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) was submitted and later approved by FEMA on February 27 for the Windy Deuce Fire (FM-5487-TX).

The Windy Deuce Fire has burned 144,206 acres with 100% containment.

**Ochiltree County:** The mandatory evacuation order remains in effect for residents from HWY 83 North to South River Road, to the Ochiltree County line.

**Potter County:** Potter County issued a Letter to the Governor requesting a declaration of a state of emergency on February 27. The city of Amarillo issued a disaster declaration on February 27.

**Randall County:** Randall County issued a disaster declaration on February 27.

**Roberts County:** Roberts County issued a disaster declaration on February 27 and a Disaster Summary Outline on March 4.

**Wheeler County:** Wheeler County Judge issued a disaster declaration on February 29.

## **RESPONDING STATE AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS REPORTS**

**Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas A&M University System (TDEM):** TDEM coordinated with Agriculture and Natural Resources, AgriLife, and various private sector partners to process donated fencing equipment for the Animal Supply Points in Region 1. Communication with our partners continues to maintain situational awareness. TDEM worked with AgriLife Extension, Daisy Farms, and Logistics to move hay from Daisy Farms location to the Panhandle for the Animal Supply Centers. TDEM alongside AgriLife contacted feed companies and big box retailers for donated resources designated for incident recovery.

TDEM has communicated with Private Sector Partners to obtain their response posture. This included a survey of the retail environment to obtain awareness for open and closed locations in the affected area. TDEM has worked with the Texas Food and Fuel Association to secure fuel in affected areas.

TDEM continues working with Mass Care and HEB to aid in maximizing their planned donations for the affected area and coordinating with Walmart regarding four associates affected by the wildfire in Fritch. Walgreens continues to provide information on the Smokehouse Creek Fire, and TDEM has connected the United Supermarkets with American Red Cross to support donations.

**TDEM Communications Coordination Group (CCG):** Cisco Systems is providing networking equipment and Starlink high performance units at the Incident Command Post (ICP) in Amarillo and to the (2) base camps in Borger and Canadian.

TDEM Communications Division will be supporting internal and external communications requests through the deployment of Iridium satellite phones and hand-held land mobile radios (LMR). Other Private Sector Partners have reached out to offer assistance and resources.

The National Emergency Management Response (NEMR) group has a communications platform deployed to the Borger Base Camp.

**Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife):** AgriLife currently has six personnel working at the Pampa Animal Supply point, three personnel at the Borger Animal Supply Point, four personnel supporting the Canadian Animal Supply point, two personnel at the Miami satellite distribution site, and one liaison at the Incident Support Team (IST). A total of 39 requests for AgriLife assistance have been received and were forwarded to AgriLife field representatives to contact the affected landowners.

AgriLife Extension DAR Communications continues to provide the public with information and response materials via the news media and social media accounts. AgriLife Extension continues to coordinate efforts with ESF 11 partners and industries to ship additional resources to animal supply points. AgriLife Extension leadership met to begin demobilization planning of DAR agents and defer to management to the local County Extension Agents. North Region DAR Agents will continue to provide support to County Extension Agents as needed.

AgriLife developed a DAR publication *Returning Home After a Wildfire* hosted on the [www.texashelp.tamu.edu](http://www.texashelp.tamu.edu) website. A press release was made on [Recognizing Mental Health Challenges and Symptoms following Wildfires](#).

**Texas A&M Forest Service (TAMFS):** TAMFS will maintain a resource footprint in Region 1 that will be comprised of out-of-state and TAMFS equipment. All TIFMAS resources were demobilized statewide on March 17.

**Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC):** [On March 20, all TAHC released their personnel and assets for this activation.](#) TAHC has distributed livestock focused publications addressing carcass disposal guidance, state, and federal resources, and AgriLife supply point information. The total number of estimated reported animal losses to date is: 7,350.

See the [TAHC Natural Disasters webpage](#) for updated information and resources for the 2024 Texas Panhandle Wildfires.

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ):** TCEQ has staff available to respond to any air/water/waste issues including drinking water and wastewater or emergency response. TCEQ staff continue to provide technical assistance on debris and waste management operations.

**Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS):** [DPS has released all personnel and assets for this activation.](#)

**Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT):** Regional clean-up efforts are being coordinated by TxDOT, TDEM, TCEQ & local officials. TxDOT Emergency Management and SOC LNO are assigned to recovery efforts. Preliminary damage assessments and costs are being tracked and gathered.

All major highways are open and flowing, however, motorists are encouraged to drive with caution and check [DriveTexas.org](https://www.drive-texas.org) for the most current road conditions, visibility warnings and road closures.

**Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS):** The State Medical Operations Center remains activated.

**DSHS Texas Emergency Medical Task Force (DSHS/EMTF):** One Wildland Fire Support (WLFS) package is in Amarillo and remains activated for future requests.

**Texas Military Department (TMD):** The SOC Support team has released the remaining six personnel activated for this incident.

**Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC):** HHSC has deployed a six-person Rapid Behavioral Health Assessment Team (RBHAT) to Amarillo to evaluate both the incident situation and to assess the behavioral health resources needed. HHSC has one liaison at the SOC and the 2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network is distributing relevant information about disaster response, including shelter locations.

**Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR):** TDLR staff are at the SOC and stand ready to assist as requested.

**American Red Cross (ARC):** The Red Cross response has moved into the Recovery phase and will be positioned at key community locations to meet with survivors. Disaster assessment and Disaster Emergency Supplies (DES) is continuing in identified areas and the ARC has 65 volunteers and staff assigned to the operation.

Total Assessments: 1,004 Destroyed: 280 Major Damage: 0

The ARC has distributed 1,126 meals, 60 clean up kits, 15,219 DES, and 332 households have been provided with DES to date. Individual assistance has been provided to 74 cases.

**Texas Baptist Men (TBM):** TBM has received requests for debris cleanup assistance and 40 pending cleanup requests for fire recovery, chainsaw, and heavy equipment. TBM Hay & Feed Team has collected donations and organized deliveries, including food pantry items, fuel, animal feed, and 300+ bales of hay. Services provided by TBM as of March 15, include a total of 9,084.5 hours logged by volunteers, 3,046 meals prepared, 104 damage assessments completed, 548 hours of heavy equipment operations, 689 showers, and 446 loads of laundry provided to volunteers and victims.

**The Southern Baptist of Texas Convention (SBTC):** SBTC has prepared 2,901 meals as of March 18. A Quick Response Feeding Unit continues to support the operation. SBTCS has received 51 work requests, 24 clean-up assistance jobs have been completed by SBTC, 22 clean-up assistance jobs were completed by other groups, provided 336 showers, cleaned 250 loads of laundry, and logged 317 hours for heavy equipment. STBC has 25 active volunteers and provided 5,400 volunteer hours. A total of 462 bales of hay have been donated.

**The Salvation Army (TSA):** TSA has distributed 2,104 meals, 2,192 snacks, 2,149 drinks, 203 comfort/hygiene kits, 190 Emotional & Spiritual Care (ESC) Contacts, 79 gift cards, 29 food boxes, 15 bibles, and 46 TSA store vouchers. ESC teams will continue to support the community through March 17. Operations have been turned over to the local units. The Borger Service Unit will participate in an upcoming Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) in Fritch on March 15.

### STATE RESOURCES COMMITTED

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
TDEM	Mass Care ESF6	1	0	Assigned	SOC
TDEM	ISTF HQ Staff	2	0	Assigned	SOC
TDEM	VOAD	1	0	Assigned	SOC
AgriLife	SOC LNO	2	0	Assigned	Austin/SOC
AgriLife	IST Liaison	1	0	Assigned	Amarillo
AgriLife	Administration	3	0	Assigned	College Station
AgriLife	Marketing and Comms PIO	1	0	Assigned	College Station
AgriLife	DAR Agents	6	0	Assigned	Pampa
AgriLife	DAR Agents	4	0	Assigned	Hemphill
AgriLife	DAR Agents	3	0	Assigned	Hutchinson
AgriLife	DAR Agents	2	0	Assigned	Roberts
TAHC	Livestock Inspectors	2	2	Released	Borger, Canadian, Fritch, and Pampa

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
TxDOT	SOC Liaison	1	0	Assigned	Austin/SOC
TxDOT	EMC	1	0	Activated	Austin/SOC
DSHS EMTF	WLFS PKG	5	3	Assigned	Amarillo
HHSC	RBHAT	6	0	Assigned	Amarillo

**FINAL COMMENTS:** The State Operations Center (SOC) is at Level II (Escalated Response Conditions). The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) continues to monitor the situation and will provide additional situation reports as needed.

**The four levels of SOC activation are:**

- Level I (Emergency Conditions)
- Level II (Escalated Response Conditions)
- Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)
- Level IV (Normal Conditions)

*This Situation Report can be found on the TDEM webpage at:*  
<https://tdem.texas.gov/response/state-operations-center#tab-3>

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