



Texas Division of Emergency Management State Situation Report

New Information in Blue Text

Event Name	24-0001 Wildfire Season 2024
Date	March 23, 2024
Time	10:00 AM
Operational Period	8:00 AM March 22 to 8:00 AM March 23, 2024
Report Number	24

TDEM Regions Affected	1
DDs Active	None

STATEWIDE CURRENT SITUATION:

On March 22, Governor Abbott directed the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to activate state emergency response resources ahead of critical wildfire conditions anticipated for the Panhandle and West Texas this weekend and into the beginning of next week.

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 [Activated to Level III \(Increased Readiness Conditions\)](#) (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 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.

Disaster District (DD) 2 – Lubbock [Activated to Level III \(Increased Readiness Conditions\)](#) (Includes Bailey, Briscoe, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Cottle, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hall, Hockley, Kent, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Parmer, Stonewall, Swisher, Terry, and Yoakum Counties)

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. TDEM alongside AgriLife contacted feed companies and big box retailers for donated resources designated for incident recovery.

TDEM Communications Coordination Group (CCG): Cisco Systems is providing networking equipment and Starlink high performance units at the Incident Command Post (ICP) in Amarillo. CCG is supporting internal and external communications requests through the deployment of Iridium satellite phones and hand-held land mobile radios (LMR). 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 Liaison (LNO) coordinated with TDEM and Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) to secure additional funding for hay and feed transport to the Panhandle Animal Supply Points. The LNO also made contact with agriculture industry partners to secure fencing and supply donations at the Texas Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association convention. DAR and Community Extension Agents (CEA) Strike Team personnel in Gray, Hemphill, Hutchinson, and Roberts counties will demobilize March 30, and the management of the Animal Supply Points will be turned over to the local CEAs for distribution of supplies, on April 1. Four DAR agents located in the North Region will continue to provide support to the CEAs as needed. AgriLife currently has **six** personnel working at the Pampa Animal Supply point, **three** personnel at the Borger Animal Supply Point, **two** personnel supporting the Canadian Animal Supply point, and **one** person at the Miami satellite distribution site. A total of 39 requests for AgriLife assistance have been received and were forwarded to AgriLife field representatives to contact the affected landowners.

AgriLife developed a Disaster Recovery Agents (DAR) publication *Returning Home After a Wildfire* hosted on the 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. **TAMFS has requested two Wildland Fire Support Packages (WLFS PKG) for Childress, and Lubbock, and one WLFS PKG with a Rapid Extrication Module (REM) for Fort Stockton in anticipation of adverse wildfire weather over the weekend and into next week.**

Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC): TAHC 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 provide technical assistance on debris and waste management operations and to respond to any air/water/waste issues including drinking water and wastewater or emergency response.

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT): Motorists are encouraged to drive with caution and check DriveTexas.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 (PKG) is in Amarillo. [DSHS/EMTF will activate three additional WLFS PKG and one REM at the request of TAMFS.](#)

American Red Cross (ARC): ARC has provided 332 households with DES to date. Individual assistance has been provided to 74 cases. Total Assessments: 1,004 Destroyed: 280

Texas Baptist Men (TBM): TBM has received requests for debris cleanup assistance for fire recovery, chainsaw, and heavy equipment crews. TBM Hay & Feed Team has collected donations of 300+ bales of hay and animal feed. TBM organized deliveries, including food pantry items, and fuel to affected residents.

The Southern Baptist of Texas Convention (SBTC): [SBTC will deactivate all personnel and resources on March 23, and release volunteers to return home.](#) SBTC has prepared 3,021 meals as of March 21. SBTC has received 52 work requests, 30 requests have been completed by SBTC, and 21 were completed by other groups. A total of 892 bales of hay have been donated. SBTC has provided 370 showers, cleaned 294 loads of laundry, and logged 357 hours for heavy equipment. SBTC has 22 active volunteers accounting for 6,070 hours.

STATE RESOURCES COMMITTED

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
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	2	0	Assigned	Hemphill
AgriLife	DAR Agents	3	0	Assigned	Hutchinson
AgriLife	DAR Agents	1	0	Assigned	Roberts
TxDOT	SOC Liaison	1	0	Assigned	Austin/SOC
TxDOT	EMC	1	0	Activated	Austin/SOC
DSHS EMTF	WLFS PKG	5	3	Assigned	Amarillo
DSHS EMTF	WLFS PKG	5	3	Assigned	Childress
DSHS EMTF	WLFS PKG	5	3	Assigned	Ft. Stockton
DSHS	WLFS PKG	5	3	Assigned	Lubbock

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
EMTF					
DSHS EMTF	REM	X	X	Assigned	Ft. Stockton

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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