



Texas Division of Emergency Management State Situation Report

New Information in Blue Text

Event Name	24-0001 Wildfire Season 2024
Date	March 31, 2024
Time	10:00 AM
Operational Period	8:00 AM March 30 to 8:00 AM March 31, 2024
Report Number	32

TDEM Regions Affected	1 and 7
DDs Active	1, 2, 8, 9 & 10

STATEWIDE CURRENT SITUATION:

On March 28, Governor Abbott renewed his Wildfire Disaster Declaration for the Texas Panhandle and other counties currently identified as in drought or severe wildfire risks. Those counties listed in the declaration include Archer, Armstrong, Bailey, Baylor, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Collingsworth, Cottle, Crosby, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Donley, Fannin, Floyd, Foard, Garza, Gray, Gregg, Hale, Hall, Hansford, Hardeman, Harrison, Hartley, Haskell, Hemphill, Hockley, Hutchinson, Kent, King, Knox, Lamb, Lipscomb, Lubbock, Lynn, Moore, Motley, Nacogdoches, Newton, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Stonewall, Swisher, Terry, Throckmorton, Upshur, Wheeler, Wichita, Wilbarger, Yoakum, and Young Counties.

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 over the weekend and into the beginning of the 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)

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

DD 1 – Amarillo activated to Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)

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.

Hemphill County: Hemphill County submitted a Disaster Summary Outline to TDEM on March 3, and 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).

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).

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.

DD 2 – Lubbock (Includes Bailey, Cochran, Crosby, Dickens, Floyd, Garza, Hale, Hockley, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry, and Yoakum Counties) Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)

DD-7 Abilene (Includes Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Knox, Mitchell, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, and Throckmorton Counties) Level IV (Normal Operations)

Region 7 (Includes DDs 8, 9, and 10)

DD 8 – El Paso (Includes Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio Counties) Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)

DD 9 – Midland/Ft. Stockton (Includes Andrews, Borden, Crane, Dawson, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, Loving, Martin, Midland, Pecos, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Ward, and Winkler Counties) Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)

DD 10 – San Angelo (Includes Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Kimble, Mason, McCulloch, Menard, Reagan, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, and Tom Green Counties) Level III (Increased Readiness Conditions)

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's Public Information Officer (PIO) is preparing a new release to summarize the Animal Supply Point operations and highlight donations distributed as the agency prepares to turn the daily operations over to local County Extension Agents (CEAs) currently deployed DAR and Community Extension Agents (CEA) Strike Team personnel in Gray, Hemphill, Hutchinson, and Roberts counties will demobilize on March 30. Four DAR agents located in the North Region will continue to provide support to the CEAs as needed. AgriLife has six agents working at the Pampa Animal Supply point, three agents working at the Borger Animal Supply Point, and two personnel supporting the Miami satellite distribution site. AgriLife received 39 requests for assistance 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](#).

All DAR and CEA Strike Team personnel who are assisting with management of the four Animal Supply Points in Gray, Hutchinson, Roberts, and Hemphill counties demobilized March 30, 2024. Beginning April 1, 2023, management of the sites will be turned over to the local county Extension Agents for distribution of remaining supplies. Four DAR agents who are located in the North Region will continue to provide support to CEA's as needed.

Texas A&M Forest Service (TAMFS): TIFMAS resources are staged in the following locations: two strike teams (ST) to Amarillo (ST 130/131), two strike teams to Lubbock (ST133/134), one strike team to Childress (ST132), one strike team to Big Spring (ST135), and one strike team to Alpine (ST136).

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): Four Wildland Fire Support (WLFS) packages and a Rapid Extraction Module (REM) are in Amarillo, Childress, Fort Stockton, and Lubbock due to elevated fire conditions.

Texas Military Department (TMD): TMD has one UH-60 rotary wing aircraft with four crew activated to provide direct support to TAMFS with aerial fire suppression.

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

STATE RESOURCES COMMITTED

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
AgriLife	SOC LNO	1	0	Assigned	Austin/SOC
AgriLife	Administration	3	0	Available	College Station
AgriLife	Marketing and Comms PIO	1	0	Available	College Station
AgriLife	DAR Agents	6	0	Released	Pampa
AgriLife	DAR Agents	0	0	Released	Hemphill
AgriLife	DAR Agents	3	0	Released	Hutchinson
AgriLife	DAR Agents	2	0	Released	Roberts
TAMFS	ST 130	16	6	Activated	Amarillo
TAMFS	ST 131	16	6	Activated	Amarillo

Agency	Resource Kind and Type	Personnel	Equip	Status	Location
TAMFS	ST 132	14	6	Activated	Childress
TAMFS	ST 133	14	6	Activated	Lubbock
TAMFS	ST 134	14	6	Activated	Lubbock
TAMFS	ST 135	15	6	Activated	Big Spring
TAMFS	ST 136	19	6	Activated	Alpine
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	Lubbock
DSHS EMTF	WLFS PKG/REM	9	4	Assigned	Ft. Stockton
TMD	UH-60 Fire Suppression	4	1	Activated	Austin

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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