The Bandera Prophet

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Burn ban lifted, but don't strike that match yet

By Jessica Goode
The Bandera Prophet

As of today, the countywide burn ban is lifted, but that doesn't necessarily mean everyone should start burning. Although the ground is wet, authorities say it will dry fast and there's a lot of dead grass that could still ignite.

Two days of rain stalled the renewal of the previous ban, which expired at midnight last night. County Fire Marshal John Stith said the county would watch and see what happens.

"If we start seeing fires, we're going to have to put it back on," Stith said.

Urging caution with regard to burning, Stith said wet dead grass is similar to a T-shirt that's soaking wet.

"Once the sun comes out and dries the shirt, see how fast it will light," Stith said. "The recommendation is just because you can burn doesn't mean the conditions are good to burn."

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index, used to scale forest fire potential, rates Bandera County an average of 638 on a scale of zero to 800, with 800 the highest risk.

Anyone who wants to burn is advised to call the Sheriff's Office to make sure a temporary ban for that day is not in effect.