

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Burn ban in effect

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The Bandera Prophet

County commissioners unanimously approved a countywide burn ban, effective immediately. Dry vegetation, no rain and a high Keetch Byram Drought Index can be a devastating trio, and Fire Marshal John Stith is trying to stay ahead of the curve.

With a KBDI of 400 to 600, fire intensity significantly increases, as well as smoke and control problems, Stith said. When it reaches and extends beyond 600, which is where Bandera County is now, he said fires burn to mineral soil and continue burning underground to the roots. Further, spotting - when embers fly 50 to 100 yards from the source - is a bigger problem now, especially with seasonal fronts blowing in that carry wind gusts up to 35 mph.

Stith said in the past month, local firefighters have battled 17 fires, all of which were intentionally started to burn brush or refuse. If a fire is started and becomes out of control, law enforcement has the authority to issue citations.