

OKLAHOMA WILDLAND



TAILGATE SERIES
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Oklahoma Forestry Services developed this training tool for fire departments as a supplement to formal firefighter training. Watch for a new message quarterly to use in formal safety meetings or in small "tailgate" groups as an effective way to increase preparedness and improve safety. The Tailgate Series is available at www.forestry.ok.gov

BACK TO BASICS

COMMON DENOMINATORS OF FIRE BEHAVIOR ON TRAGEDY FIRES

- 🔥 On relatively small fires or deceptively quiet areas of large fires.
- 🔥 In relatively light fuels, such as grass, herbs and light brush.
- 🔥 When there is an unexpected shift in wind direction or in wind speed.
- 🔥 When fire responds to topographic conditions and runs uphill.

Consider a recent fire that you have responded to. Were any of these common denominators present? Remember, most incidents occur on relatively small fires or isolated portions of large fires.

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Lookouts Establish a lookout whenever possible to observe fire behavior and monitor potential hazards to personnel committed to suppression actions.

Communications Establish common communications or strategically assign personnel in an effort to ensure reliable incident communications. Do not simply rely on radio communications and be sure that both visual and verbal communications can be maintained.

Escape Routes Establish escape routes for personnel and equipment and make them known. Escape routes should accommodate a quick retreat of all resources from the fireline.

Safety Zones Establish a safety zone that is large enough to shelter all resources, both personnel and equipment, in the event that the fire behavior and/or other fire environment safety factors mandate disengaging fire suppression activities.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

10 STANDARD WILDLAND FIRE ORDERS

FIRE BEHAVIOR

1. Keep informed on fire weather conditions and forecasts.
2. Know what your fire is doing at all times.
3. Base all actions on current and expected behavior of the fire.

FIRELINE SAFETY

4. Identify escape routes and make them known.
5. Post lookouts when there is possible danger.
6. Be alert. Keep calm. Think clearly. Act decisively.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

7. Maintain prompt communications with your forces, your supervisor and adjoining resources.
8. Give clear instructions and be sure they are understood.
9. Maintain control of your forces at all times.

AFTER 1 THROUGH 9 HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED ...

10. Fight fire aggressively, having provided for safety first.

ATTACK FROM THE BLACK



TACTICAL SAFETY

- Avoid frontal assault at the head of the fire whenever possible.
- Begin firefighting efforts from an anchor point to decrease potential of the fire out-flanking firefighters.
- Commit fire engines and equipment into the black and work the fire from the inside out in light fuels.
- Avoid operating in unburned fuels near the fireline to avoid potential turnover situations.

PROBLEMATIC AND EXTREME FIRE BEHAVIOR WEATHER INDICATORS

In Oklahoma, most fires are carried in fine fuels such as grass and leaf litter. These fine fuels react quickly to changes in the weather.

Any time the following weather parameters are present the potential for problematic or extreme behavior increases:

	DORMANT SEASON (WINTER)	GROWING SEASON (SUMMER)
Temperature	Greater than 65°	Greater than 95°
Wind	Greater than 20 mph	Greater than 20 mph
Relative Humidity	Less than 25%	Less than 25%

ON THE FIREGROUND

APPLYING WHAT
YOU'VE LEARNED



On a warm and windy day in March, you are dispatched to a fire at 2:30 p.m. near the Johnson's place. In your rush to get your fire gear on, you think about the lack of rain and know that Mr. Johnson has been clearing fence rows around his pasture.

You arrive on scene in a Type 6 engine with a rookie firefighter on board and see that Mr. Johnson was burning brush that he had pulled from the fencerow. The fire is now beginning to build and work across the pasture toward a brushy ravine. The fire is approximately two acres and still in the pasture grasses. The old pasture is beginning to get some brush in it since it has not been utilized for seven or eight years. Two more engines are on the way as well as one water tender.

The best access is from a gravel road on a two-track road that has a good, wide gate. You size up the fire and establish command. In the rush of planning the initial attack, what do you need to consider?

CONSIDER THE 10 STANDARD FIRE ORDERS:

- 🔥 Did your plan account for the current and expected fire behavior?
- 🔥 Did you account for the safety of your rookie counterpart and others that are responding?
- 🔥 Were you prepared to attack in an organized effort?



OKLAHOMA FORESTRY SERVICES

A Division of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry



Drew Daily

FREE ONLINE WILDFIRE REPORTING SYSTEM FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Why report your wildfires? Providing a more accurate picture of Oklahoma's fire situation will result in enhanced funding opportunities returning to your community. Your fire information is vital and can be used to leverage federal disaster assistance as follows:

- Increased funding for firefighting.
- Raising Oklahoma's priority to receive national resources to assist state and local resources fighting Oklahoma fires, including aircraft, crews and equipment.
- Documentation for Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) floor costs when wildfire disasters occur.

Report wildfires at www.forestry.ok.gov/firereports

Drew Daily, a fire ecologist with the Oklahoma Forestry Services (OFS), is responsible for the statewide prescribed fire program. As a part of the OFS Incident Management Team, Drew responds to wildland fires statewide, assisting with initial attack and suppression. With more than 20 years of wildland fire experience, Drew is also qualified with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group as a Type 3 Incident Commander; Division Supervisor; All-Hazard Operations Section Chief; and Type 2 Burn Boss. Prior to joining the OFS fire team, Drew served with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Fire Control Headquarters, as the Wildland Fire Supervisor.