



PRESS RELEASE
Tomball Fire Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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After careful consideration, the Tomball Fire Department is cancelling its Annual Fourth of July Fireworks Show. This decision is based on the current and predicted weather patterns over the next week. The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is at historically dry levels in Harris and surrounding counties and there is little to no moisture predicted before July 4th. The recent rain reduced the index to just below 700 but, with no precipitation in the forecast, a high pressure area sitting over most of the state is pushing the humidity levels down and causing additional drying of the grass and woods. The index is expected to be well above 700 by the end of the week. The KBDI index indicates that levels above the 700 mark create extreme fire potential conditions.

The Tomball Fire Department has responded to several local grass and woods fires over the past several weeks, some reaching more than 50 acres in size, and we have observed fire behavior that has not been seen in our memories.

While the Tomball Fire Department July 4th Fireworks Show is professionally managed by state licensed pyrotechnics, each year we accept a certain amount of risk in presenting the display. In the past, we developed a safety plan to mitigate those risks and the show went on. This year, with the predicted weather conditions and the prevailing winds coming from the south, the debris field from the show is projected to fall north of Hicks Street and into a very dry heavily wooded residential area.

It is for these reasons that I feel the City and the Fire Department cannot accept this level of risk. Our purpose is to protect lives, property and the environment and, given the existing and predicted conditions, introducing a source of ignition into a tinder dry environment is not prudent.

The other Fire Department planned activities at the Target Parking Lot, FM2920 at Parr Court, will continue as planned.