



HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

M. S. Montgomery
Fire Marshal

June 17, 2009

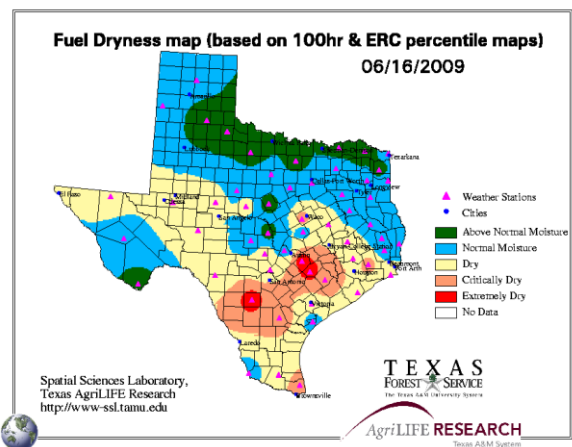
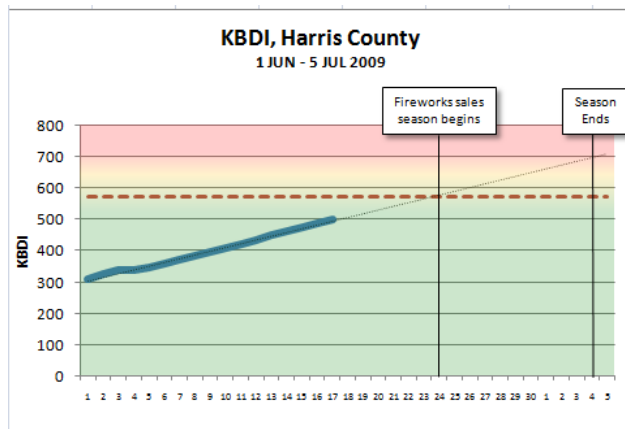
Subj: It's Getting DRY out there !!



This cautionary statement is based on information provided by the Texas Forest Service, Governor's Division of Emergency Management, and the National Weather Service



Two key indicators of potential drought conditions and increased fire danger -- average KBDI and fuel dryness -- suggest that it could be a hot, dry summer in Harris County. The **average KBDI**, or Keetch-Byram Drought Index, has increased from a moderate value of 310 on June 1 to 499, a number more closely associated with late summer. Likewise, the **fuel dryness** has increased from "low" on June 1 to "dry". These trends are expected to continue unless there is significant rain.



What it means:

For Harris County, the current fire danger is MODERATE, but the forecast fire danger is HIGH. Citizens should:

- Be careful when smoking, welding, or outdoor cooking;
- Avoid outdoor burning if possible;
- Limit the use of fireworks, especially in grassy areas; and
- Protect property by establishing a "green", defensive space by removing firewood, dry brush, and other combustibles from around homes or other buildings

The Fire Marshal's Office will continue to monitor conditions, and may recommend outdoor burning restrictions before month's end unless there is a forecast of significant rainfall across the area.

What about fireworks?

Since the average KBDI in Harris County was well below the 575 trigger point at the statutory deadline of June 15, there is no restriction on the sales or use of certain aerial fireworks -- rockets with sticks and missiles with fins -- at this time. Fire officials are in close contact with the Harris County Chapter of the Texas Fireworks Association, and have discussed voluntary removal of those products from sale if KBDI reaches 575.

For additional information about the current wildfire threat, visit the Texas Interagency Coordinating Center website at: <http://www.tamu.edu/ticc>