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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 21, 2022

Officials issue county-wide burn ban amid “extreme fire danger”

The Rogers County Board of County Commissioners held an emergency meeting Wednesday Sep. 21 issuing a county-wide burn ban due to dry weather conditions and wind, effective immediately.

District 1 Commissioner Dan DeLozier said current conditions are favorable for “out-of-control-fires” prompting an urgent decision. He said he had several calls regarding the extreme fire dangers from fire chiefs concerned about the magnitude of fire outbreaks right now.

Rogers County Emergency Management Deputy Director Steve Massey said most fire departments are in favor of the burn ban due to ongoing fires.

U.S. Drought Monitor and the National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts no more than one-half inch of rain for the next 3 days. The drought tool monitors the intensity of fire danger on a scale of D0-D4. Rogers County’s intensity category level is D3 (extreme).

The Oklahoma Forestry listed 11 counties under a burn ban, which includes nearby Tulsa County.

Oklahoma Statute, Title 2, Section 16 -26.B states this burn ban does not apply to gas or electric grilling over non-flammable surfaces or industrial welding over non-flammable surfaces. Residents should take

great care when grilling on non-flammable surfaces, which should happen on a hard 10-square-foot fireproof material surface.

Welding, grinding and gas torch work may only occur with a dedicated fire-watch person and a safe way to extinguish a fire.

The statute makes it illegal for any person “to set fire to any forest, grass, range, crop, or other wild lands, or to build a campfire or bonfire, or to burn trash or other material that may cause a forest, grass, range, crop of other wild lands fire.”

Violations can be enforced by local or state law enforcement officials. The ban remains in effect until October 3 when commissioners revisit the agenda item to determine if extreme fire danger conditions persist.