

## Office of the State Fire Marshal Offer Tips And Best Practices To Prevent Wildfires In Kansas

With the nice weather Kansas has experienced over the past few days, fire departments across the state are already experiencing an increase in grass burning incidents – some of which have already gotten out of control. Many of these fires are threatening property and structures and have resulted in injury to the firefighters responding to the fires.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) provides tips and resources for helping farmers and ranchers to have safe and successful prescribed burns of their fields and pastures.

“By following these proven steps for safely burning fields or brush, Kansans will not be as likely to produce fires that burn out of control and put lives and property at risk,” says Doug Jorgensen, State Fire Marshal.

The OSFM and Kansas Interagency Wildfire Council offer the following tips and best practices to help ensure a burn doesn’t become a wildfire:

- Know all state and local fire restrictions. Check with county officials who are charged with deciding whether burning is permissible based on local conditions.
- Notify neighbors as a courtesy prior to burning.
- Postpone the burn if unsure of the fuel and weather conditions.
- Have adequate resources and equipment available to prevent escaped fires.
- Consider smoke management to avoid unsafe roads and air quality conditions.
- Do not burn to the ends of the field. Setting boundaries, “back burning” and keeping the fire off of fence rows will prevent out-of-control burns.

Kansas experienced a significant increase in acres burned between 2013 and 2014. Total acres burned rose from 22,482 in 2013 to 184,716 in 2014 – more than 8 times as many field burns in just one year.