

Mid-Missouri River Prescribed Burn Association members,

After a season of wet, stormy weather we now must deal with the COVID-19 virus. The MMRPBA board members have decided to offer several guidelines to address our proposed 2020 burn season. The guidelines listed below shall determine if a burn should be initiated and/or carried out under the immediate COVID-19 situation:

1. The MMRPBA will follow all CDC recommended Covid-19 guidelines as well as all County resolutions and ordinances. Regarding social distancing, we are not conducting prescribed burns that requires travelling outside of our respective communities or that would compromise social distancing of our members until the threat of contracting or spreading the virus has gone away. The health of our members and their families is more important than conducting prescribed burns.
2. Consider postponing or delaying non-essential CRP and rangeland burns that can be burned later this summer, fall, or next spring.
3. Some of our MMRPBA members are committed to other duties in their respective communities in response to the COVID-19 situation that will not allow them to assist with proposed prescribed burns. We have several members who serve on volunteer fire departments, ambulance departments and other healthcare duties. These duties will take precedence for the time being.
4. If you do make the decision to proceed, below are some things that should be considered:
 - * Look at your burn plan. If your crew roster requires more than 10 persons, some County ordinances will not allow the assembly. Consider smaller burns until the pandemic is over.
 - * Tell members if they are not comfortable helping that you understand and to do what is best for them, their family, and community.
 - * Stay home if you feel the slightest hint of symptoms – know that many people are asymptomatic and spread this virus without knowing it.
 - * Follow all local, state, and federal guidance
 - * Bring your own food and drink
 - * Avoid sharing equipment on burns and between burns
 - * Wash clothing daily
 - * Wear gloves when handling equipment
 - * Sanitize radios with a spray or wipe and keep same radio all spring if possible
 - * Maintain your distance
 - * Briefing circles are going to get larger

- * Be prepared that some members will decide the risk is not worth it and you may struggle to find help.
As you all know, doing a burn with a skeleton crew is tempting but comes with more risk.

Keep in mind, this is an evolving situation changing from day to day. Please feel free to contact any of the MMRPBA board members if you have any questions, concerns or comments about the 2020 burn season. Stay safe and take care of yourself and your families.