

## Parks and Recreation Enacts Burning Restriction Effective Immediately



**(CENTRAL TEXAS)** - Dangerous fire conditions currently exist in the Central Texas area. In accordance with established criteria, the Parks and Recreation Department has issued a Parks Burning Restriction effective October 16, 2024, to ensure the safety of park patrons and surrounding communities, while minimizing the wildfire risk in the City's parks, greenbelts, and preserves. The burning restriction will be lifted when weather conditions are more favorable.

The burning restriction prohibits the building of fires and grilling in all City of Austin parks, greenbelts, and preserves – pursuant to Ordinance No. 20111102-025 – effective immediately and until further notice. This includes using wood or charcoal BBQ pits/grills/smokers. Propane stoves are allowed in designated picnic areas only. As a general reminder, smoking is always prohibited in City of Austin parks.

Park Rangers will enforce the burning restriction in the City's parks and greenbelts. Violations may result in a fine between \$300 and \$500. Austin Parks and Recreation will continue to evaluate fire conditions and will lift the burning restriction as soon as it is safe to do so; a press release will be distributed at that time. For more information about wildfires, please visit [AustinTexas.gov/Wildfire](https://AustinTexas.gov/Wildfire).

## Austin Energy Community Connections Fair

Saturday, October 26, 2024  
From 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM



Austin Energy's annual Community Connections Resource Fair is a free, family-friendly event that combines fun with learning to assist our customers who sometimes could use a little help to meet basic needs.

Local service providers and City departments host this annual event. You can expect fun and informative demonstrations and presentations on community assistance resources available for moderate-to-low income families in the Austin area.

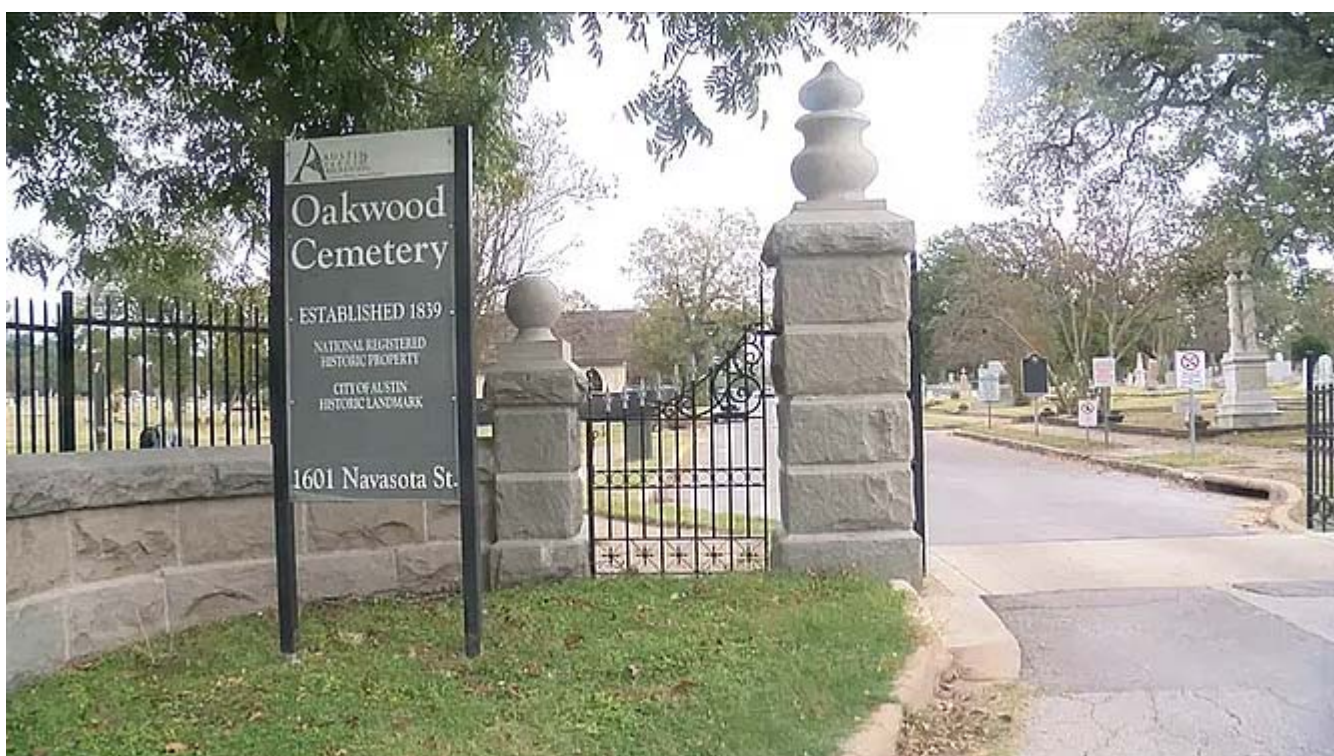
**This year's event will be:**

Saturday, October 26, 2024  
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Akins High School**  
**10701 S 1st St.**  
**Austin, TX 78748**



## The Oakwood Cemetery's "Oakwood Legacy Project" Achieves Three Major Milestones Documenting Austin's Historically Segregated Communities of Color



**(EAST AUSTIN, TX)** - The Oakwood Cemetery announces achieving three major milestones that document the lives and contributions of Austin's historically segregated communities of color through the "Oakwood Legacy Project."

The "Oakwood Legacy Project" has created a 3D model of the Oakwood Cemetery's Historic Colored Grounds, audited and published burial records of segregated Austinites through the year 1880, and has launched 18 foundational multimedia history projects focused on the untold stories of Austin's communities of color.

The Oakwood Cemetery's "Oakwood Legacy Project" was made possible through the awarding of the Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from

the National Endowment of the Humanities to the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department during 2021-2023, as well as countless volunteer hours and work donated by Austin community members and subject matter experts.

Today, the "Oakwood Legacy Project" shares digital tours, exhibits, and cemetery records with the general public. The "Oakwood Legacy Project" work continues as the Cemetery staff and community members continue to research records and update the 3D model of the Oakwood Cemetery's Historic Colored Grounds. To date, the 18 historical exhibits have garnered almost 80,000 views online and won acclaim from Preservation Austin for educational merit.

## Mayor Watson Issues Disaster Declaration for Wildfire Threat



**(AUSTIN, TX)** - City of Austin Mayor Kirk Watson and Travis County Judge Andy each issued a pre-emptive disaster declaration on Thursday morning in response to Governor Greg Abbott doing so at the state level on Wednesday. With no measurable rain in more than 40 days, Austin and Travis County are at severe risk of wildfires spreading.

"Austin ranks sixth in the nation for number of homes at risk of wildfire," Watson said. "With that in mind, and taking into consideration the heightened risk we face due to dry conditions, I am hereby declaring The City of Austin to be in a state of disaster for wildfires. This will allow our public safety staff to begin tracking expenses accrued and expedite the reimbursement from the federal or state government in the event a wildfire should occur during this declaration."

Declaring a disaster pre-emptively is common for other natural disasters like hurricanes to allow governments to begin implementing mitigation efforts and organize behind the scenes to prepare for the response and recovery phases should a disaster occur. The early declaration makes tracking resources and personnel used in mitigation, response, and recovery efforts easier and fast-tracks the reimbursement request process from state and federal agencies.

With a large number of travelers expected in the Austin area this weekend for multiple sporting events, Austin's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management Interim Director Bill Wilson emphasizes the importance of taking precautions to prevent wildfires from sparking.

"Wildfires can spread very quickly," Wilson said. "The last thing we want to see is a wildfire spread at a large venue where thousands of people are gathered to have a good time. The dry conditions we are experiencing make this a particularly dangerous time. More than 90% of wildfires are manmade. Please take this threat seriously and do what is necessary to prevent a wildfire from sparking."

### What Happens in an Evacuation?

If you are ordered to evacuate either through an alert message or directly from first responders on-scene of an active wildfire, follow those instructions. Grab your emergency supplies kit, account for all individuals and pets in your home, and leave immediately.

Follow instructions on where to go for an evacuation. If you are in the City of Austin, you will receive instructions to go to a Temporary Assembly Point, or TAP. The purpose of the TAP is to help first responders account for all households in the evacuation zone. Once at the TAP, you will be asked to provide your status and whether or not you have a safe place to go, i.e. a friend or relative.

It is imperative that all evacuees check in with the Temporary Assembly Point. Not doing so can put the lives of first responders at further risk by diverting their efforts to rescuing people from homes that are already evacuated. This process allows for a more accurate account of which individuals still need assistance or help seeking a safe place to stay.

You can learn more about wildfire preparedness at [ReadyCentralTexas.gov](https://ReadyCentralTexas.gov).