

# PENNSYLVANIA PRESCRIBED FIRE STANDARDS

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this guide is to provide standards, establish common terminology and definitions, and identify planning and implementation procedures for the use of prescribed fire in Pennsylvania.

These standards specify what is minimally acceptable for prescribed fire planning and implementation. Organizations may choose to establish additional standards and policy direction, but they must adhere to, and cannot modify, these minimums.

These standards are meant to provide oversight for broadcast burning, not pile or agricultural burning.

## **Prescribed Fire Program Goals**

Pennsylvania's prescribed fire program goals are to:

1. Provide for firefighter and public safety as the first priority.
2. Ensure that risk management is incorporated into all prescribed fire activities.
3. Use prescribed fire in a safe, carefully planned, and approved manner.
4. Utilize prescribed fire to achieve specific fire and natural resource management objectives.

## **Authorities**

Prescribed fire in Pennsylvania is authorized by the Pennsylvania Prescribed Burning Practices Act (Act 17 of 2009). All prescribed fires conducted in Pennsylvania must be performed in accordance with this act and these standards.

This guide was developed by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council, Training and Standards Committee.

**2026 revisions are in red**

## **Notifications**

Two separate notifications are required by Pennsylvania Prescribed Burning Practices Act:

### **1) Notification of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**

Written notification of the intent to conduct a prescribed fire, including **the entire burn plan** must be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection through its [OnBase Electronic Forms Public Upload System](#) at least 25 working days prior to the earliest possible date that a burn could occur.

The appropriate DEP regional office must be notified **at least** 24 hours prior to a prescribed fire through the same [OnBase Electronic Forms Public Upload System](#).

### **2) Notification of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

Written notification of the intent to conduct a prescribed fire, including the burn plan must be emailed to the Pennsylvania DCNR Prescribed Fire Specialist Todd Breininger ([tbreininge@pa.gov](mailto:tbreininge@pa.gov)) at least 25 working days prior to the earliest possible date that a burn could occur.

Written notification must again be made to Todd Breininger no more than 5 working days after the prescribed fire has been completed. This notification must include the date(s) that the fire occurred, RX Fire number, county, township, number of units burned, and final acreage.

## **Prescribed Fire Qualifications and Organization**

All personnel who participate in prescribed burning in Pennsylvania must be qualified for their assigned position. There are three options for qualification as outlined below.

### **Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program**

The Certified Prescribed Burn Manager (CPBM) program was introduced in 2023 as a more attainable certification pathway for landowners and non-government organizations conducting low complexity burns. Certification requires completion of 5 NWCG/FEMA fire classes that are mostly available online, participation on 5 burns, completion of the CPBM training course, and completion of a competency checklist with a mentor. Full details of this program are provided in Appendix D.

## **Pennsylvania Qualifications**

The minimum qualification standards are listed in the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Qualification Standards (Appendix C). These standards will apply only to prescribed fires conducted within the state. Organizations will be responsible for qualifying and tracking the training and experience of their own personnel. Thorough documentation will be necessary in order to provide individuals with the protection provided by legislation.

Qualifications are obtained through a combination of training and experience. Experience is measured by completing a position-specific task book that is evaluated by a fully qualified evaluator and also by meeting the minimum prerequisite operational period experience required for each position. Completed task books then need to be certified by the organization. Currency of qualifications will be maintained by acting in the subject capacity at least once every 5 years. In this manner, currency will also be maintained in each lower position. Trainees may participate on the scene only under the direct supervision of a qualified evaluator and the trainee must be fully qualified at the next lower level.

Individuals who fail to meet the responsibilities of their qualified position may have their qualifications revoked by their organization.

## **National Qualifications**

Individuals who are qualified at a position(s) according to the most current versions of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS-310-1), or the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG) will also be considered as qualified at the corresponding position(s) in Pennsylvania.

## **Organization**

All member organizations of the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council Steering Committee agree to accept each other's qualifications; provided that they meet the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Qualification Standards, FSFAQG, or the NWCG 310-1 Standards. The organizational structure that is outlined in the approved Prescribed Fire Plan must be used and staffed with qualified individuals for the implementation of the prescribed fire.

The complexity of each prescribed fire will dictate the organizational structure that is needed to safely achieve the objectives that are specified in the prescribed fire plan.

Minimum Burn Boss qualifications required to implement the plan will be determined by analyzing the complexity of each prescribed fire. Complexity is determined by using the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating Worksheet (Appendix H). The NWCG Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating System Guide (PMS 424) is also acceptable. Resources will be assigned based on the following chart:

Position	Complexity Rating		
	High	Moderate	Low
RXB1	Required	Optional	Optional
RXB2	Not Allowed	Required	Optional
RXB3 / CPBM	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Required
FIRB	Required	Required	Optional
Holding Function	Holding functions should be managed by someone who is qualified at FFT1 or above depending on complexity, assigned resources, and span of control. On low complexity projects, the holding duties may be assumed by the Burn Boss/CPBM.		

**Responsibilities**

Thorough planning and review processes are required prior to implementation. All prescribed fire activities should be based on natural resource and fire management objectives.

**Administrator**

On private lands, the administrator title should be changed to Landowner. For simplicity in this document, Administrator will be used.

The Agency Administrator is the individual who is the managing officer of an agency, division thereof, or jurisdiction having responsibility for incident mitigation and management.

Examples: Park Superintendent, District Forest Fire Warden, USFS Forest Supervisor, FWS Refuge Manager, Fire Chief. On private lands, the Agency Administrator will be the landowner. Individual organizations will need to designate who their accepted Agency Administrator(s) will be.

The Administrator has final approval authority for all Prescribed Fire Plans. The Prescribed Fire Plan is a contract between the Burn Boss and the Administrator. Once the Prescribed Fire Plan is approved, the Administrator is authorizing the Burn Boss to implement the burn. It then becomes the responsibility of the Burn Boss to ensure that all prescription, staffing, equipment, and other plan specifications are met before, during and after the burn.

The Administrator is responsible to:

1. Approve Prescribed Fire Plans. When approving the plan, understand the risks that are associated with it. Ensure that the objectives within the plan are consistent with natural resource or fire management objectives.
2. Ensure that fully qualified personnel are available to implement the burn plan, assign a fully qualified burn boss, and ensure that only trained and qualified personnel participate in the implementation of the prescribed fire.
3. Ensure that projects are monitored, evaluated and documented.
4. Ensure that the proper notifications are made to cooperators, partners and/or local emergency management agencies.
5. Allow the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss to have tactical control of the Prescribed Burn.

6. Ensure that all prescribed fires are conducted in accordance with the approved prescribed fire plan and established standards and guidelines.
7. Report all wildfires resulting from prescribed fires to the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry.
8. Ensure that written notifications are completed in a timely manner as outlined in the “Notifications” section of these standards.

### **Technical Reviewer**

The technical reviewer is responsible for reviewing each prescribed fire plan element for content as well as evaluating the risk and complexity analysis to ensure that the goals and objectives can be safely and successfully achieved. The technical reviewer must be qualified or previously qualified as a burn boss at or above the level of project complexity. The technical reviewer should have local knowledge of the area, experience burning in similar fuel types, or have previous experience conducting an on-site review (or all three). The technical reviewer must be someone other than the prescribed fire plan preparer.

Technical reviewer is responsible to:

1. Ensure prescribed fire plan addresses all necessary elements and objectives in the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Standards
2. Check the prescription parameters by fuel types to ensure that the project, as planned, has a reasonable chance or realistic opportunity of meeting the resource management objectives.
3. Ensure the ignition, holding and contingency plans are consistent with the predicted fire behavior and fuel types inside and outside the planned ignition unit(s).
4. Maintain communication with the Administrator.

### **Prescribed Fire Burn Boss**

The Prescribed Fire Burn Boss is responsible to the Administrator. They are responsible to ensure that the prescribed fire is implemented as outlined in the prescribed fire plan.

The Prescribed Fire Burn Boss is responsible to:

1. Review the Prescribed Fire Plan prior to implementation to ensure that all necessary elements and objectives are addressed.
2. Inspect the burn unit to ensure that the plan addresses all areas of special concern and that the expected fire behavior will be within the capabilities of the holding and contingency plan.
3. Evaluate the proposed ignition plan to ensure that it will meet the objectives.
4. Obtain current weather and smoke forecasts, updates and advisories from accepted fire weather forecasters.
5. Maintain communication with the Administrator.
6. Complete and sign the Prescribed Fire GO/NO-GO Checklist (See Appendix B).
7. Confirm the availability of the contingency resources specified in the Prescribed Fire Plan.

8. Ensure that all operations are conducted in a safe manner and in accordance with the approved plan and established standards and guidelines.
9. Verify the qualifications of assigned personnel.
10. Conduct a personnel/safety briefing to ensure a safe operation.
11. Conduct the test fire and document results.
12. Exercise tactical control by supervising assigned personnel and directing the ignition, holding and monitoring operations, including mop-up and patrol.
13. Ensure that weather conditions and fire behavior are being monitored and documented.
14. Declare the prescribed fire out per organization specific standards.
15. Determine when the prescribed fire is not within prescription parameters or is not meeting the plan objectives and initiate the necessary contingency action.
16. Declare an escaped prescribed fire a wildfire, as defined by these standards.
17. Manage the suppression of the wildfire or oversee the transition to another Incident Commander if an escape occurs.
18. Ensure that reports are completed.
19. Coordinate with adjacent landowners and cooperators as designated in the Prescribed Fire Plan.

### **Firing Boss**

The Firing Boss reports to the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss and is responsible for supervising and directing ignition operations according to established standards in the Prescribed Fire Plan.

The Firing Boss is responsible to:

1. Review the Prescribed Fire Plan and the burn unit prior to implementation.
2. Brief personnel on project objectives and ignition operations.
3. Complete the test fire according to the ignition plan at the directions of the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss.
4. Conduct ignition operations in a safe manner according to the ignition plan.
5. Identify the impacts of ignition on the holding operation and the desired fire effects.
6. Coordinate ignition operations with the holding specialist.
7. Ensure that only those personnel designated as members of the firing team actually perform the ignition.

### **Holding Function**

The supervisory position in charge of holding forces reports to the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss or assigned level of organization identified in the plan. There is no specific position in the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Qualification Standards for this function. Holding functions will be managed by personnel qualified at FFT1 or above based on prescribed fire **complexity (moderate and high)**, assigned resources, and operational span-of-control.

Holding Function responsibilities:

1. Review the Prescribed Fire Plan and the burn unit prior to implementation, preferably with both the Burn Boss and the Firing Boss.

2. Brief holding personnel on project objectives and holding operations.
3. Conduct holding operations in a safe manner according to the holding plan.
4. Provide for the safety and welfare of assigned resources.
5. Coordinate holding operations with the Firing Boss.
6. Confine the fire to a predetermined area as outlined in the Prescribed Fire Plan, including mop-up and patrol.
7. Maintain communication with the Burn Boss on holding progress and/or problems.

## **Safety**

Within all wildfire operations, firefighter and public safety are the first priority. Prescribed Fire Plans must also reflect this commitment. Every person involved in a prescribed fire is responsible for identifying safety issues and concerns. It is the responsibility of each individual participating in prescribed fire activities to notify their supervisor of any possible misunderstanding of assigned tasks or concerns related to an assignment.

All personnel assigned to the prescribed fire must be equipped with personal protective equipment meeting established agency standards.

Ignition operations must be halted when weather conditions are not within the parameters outlined in the prescribed fire plan, unless the ignition operations are deemed essential by the Burn Boss for immediate safety or control measures. Ignition operations may only be performed by those individuals designated by the burn boss and the burn boss must authorize all changes to the planned firing operation.

Exposure to smoke during prescribed fire operations can be a significant safety concern. Experience has shown that exposure to smoke on prescribed fires, especially for holding forces, often exceeds that on wildfires. Public safety impacts from smoke should be addressed in the Smoke Management Element of the Prescribed Fire Plan.

The risk management process identified in the NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG, PMS 410-1) helps ensure that critical factors and risks associated with prescribed fire operations are considered during decision making. This process is the standard that should be applied to all prescribed fire planning and operations. Consider using a Safety Officer on highly complex or highly hazardous burns.

## **Escaped Prescribed Fires**

A prescribed fire must be declared a wildfire when it has spread outside the burn unit, or is likely to do so, and cannot be contained by the resources on hand and the specified contingency resources. Due to the nature of prescribed fire activities, some fire outside of control lines may be expected. Specific management action points will be specified in the Prescribed Fire Plan.

Once declared a wildfire, the Burn Boss may then become the Incident Commander of the suppression organization or transfer command to another qualified Incident Commander. These details must be specified in the Prescribed Fire Plan.

The District Forest Fire Warden having jurisdiction must be notified of all wildfires that resulted from prescribed fires.

### **After Action Review (AAR)**

Each operational shift on a prescribed burn should have an informal After Action Review (AAR). There are many AAR formats, and one example is listed below:

1. What did we set out to do?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why did it happen that way?
4. What should be sustained?
5. What can be improved?

Prescribed fires that were converted to a wildfire should receive a formal AAR. Organizations should determine what constitutes a “formal” AAR. The goal of any AAR should be to guide future prescribed fires and policies to minimize future resource damage or threats to life and property. Other objectives are to determine if overall policy, guidance, and procedures relating to prescribed fire operations are adequate.

### **Documentation**

All prescribed fires must have a project file that will be maintained in the agency office. This documentation should be retained for a minimum of two years after the fire has been completed. The file will contain the following information:

1. Prescribed Fire Plan – original, signed copy.
2. Monitoring data including, weather, fire behavior, fire effects, and smoke effects.
3. Appropriate weather forecasts.
4. Spot weather forecast requests (if obtained) and responses.
5. Completed GO/NO-GO checklist.
6. Any completed Unit Logs (ICS-214 or equivalent).

Optional information that may be included, but is not limited to:

1. After Action Review notes.
2. Incident Action Plan.
3. Press Releases, media inquiries.
4. Post Burn reports, documentation, etc.

### **Prescribed Fire Plan**

The Prescribed Fire Plan is the site-specific implementation document. It serves as a contract between the Administrator and the Burn Boss. By signing the cover page, the Administrator approves of the plan and agrees to allow the Burn Boss to implement the plan. The Burn Boss’ signature guarantees that the prescribed fire will only be conducted within the scope of the plan. The plan includes all of the information needed to implement the prescribed fire. The size and complexity of each prescribed fire will determine the level of detail that is required in the fire

plan. Prescribed fires must be implemented in compliance with the written plan. A thorough and well-written plan is essential to the success of any prescribed fire.

### **Shelf life of a Plan**

A plan is effective for three years from the date of the last approval signature on the cover page, or when the project has been completed, whichever comes first, as long as no changes have been made to the plan or have occurred to the unit. However, a burn boss must review and sign the plan each year.

The same burn plan can be used for repeated treatments during the three-year life span of a plan. It must be stated on the cover page that the plan will be used for multiple treatments.

### **Amendments to the Prescribed Fire Plan**

There may be a need to make amendments to the Prescribed Fire Plan. These are changes to the Prescribed Fire Plan that require Administrator signature. When changes are necessary, plans must be amended to identify the affected sections; the reason for the change(s); and have the changes clearly identified. Common reasons for amending the Prescribed Fire Plan may include, but are not limited to:

- Changes to objectives.
- Changes to complexity.
- Changes to fire behavior prescription parameters.
- Changes to burn unit boundaries resulting in an increase in area.
- Reduction in resource capabilities identified as required in the plan.
- Major changes to ignition methods.

To avoid having to amend the Prescribed Fire Plan, flexibility should be built into the plan that will allow for a range of adjustments during the prescribed fire. Examples of flexibility that can be built into a prescribed fire plan:

- The Prescribed Fire Plan may state that on burn day and subsequent days of the prescribed fire, a mix of the number and kinds of hand crews and engines may be modified as long as stated production capabilities are not compromised.
- Minor changes in the burn unit boundaries to facilitate holding and/or ignition which requires no change in holding or ignition resources.
- Additional resources may be assigned to the project without amending the burn plan if the addition of these resources does not change the complexity of the burn or require additional supervisory positions. These changes must be discussed at the briefing.

## **Required Elements of All Prescribed Fire Plans**

The template in this document lists the minimum amount of information that must be included in a plan for all prescribed fires conducted in Pennsylvania. Other formats may be used as long as they contain the 24 required elements listed here. If a specific element of the plan does not apply to a specific fire, simply write not applicable (N/A) in the blank. Any additional information such as maps, diagrams, etc., should be added as appendices to the plan.

### **Cover Page**

At least three dated signatures must appear on the front cover: a plan preparer, the technical reviewer, the Burn Boss, and the Administrator. The technical reviewer must be qualified or have been previously qualified as a prescribed fire burn boss at an experience level equal or higher than the complexity being reviewed. Burn day contact information (name and number) should be included on the cover page. If the plan covers repeated treatments in the project area over the 3-year lifespan, it should be stated on the cover page. The plan expiration date or something similar to the example plan on page 17 will be included on the cover page. If the plan needs to be amended, the signed and dated amendments must be attached to the Prescribed Fire Plan.

### **Element 1 – Location**

Include information on the location of the burn including ownership, forest district, township, county, etc.

### **Element 2 – Burn Unit Area Description**

- A. Burn Unit Narrative Description – Include a written description of fuels and topography in and outside of the burn unit. A definitive description of the burn unit boundaries must be included. This is the area where the fire will be ignited and allowed to burn. A short history of the project and related treatments should also be included. The burn unit may be divided into smaller units, per organizational standards.
- B. Burn Unit Description Table – For each vegetation type in the burn unit, an entry should be made on the table.
- C. Maps – At a minimum, a location map and a burn unit map must be included. Other maps may be included if deemed appropriate. These maps should be attached to the end of the plan. Maps should show prominent features in the area, topography, water sources etc. The burn unit boundaries must be shown on the map.

### **Element 3 – Prescribed Fire Justification**

- A. Prescribed Fire Management Goals – Include a written description on the management goals of the project. Also, describe how they will fit in with natural resource or fire management goals for the area.
- B. Specific, Measurable Prescribed Fire Objectives – Describe in clear, concise statements the specific, measurable resource and fire objectives for this prescribed fire. Objectives

must be measurable and quantifiable so that prescription elements can be developed and so that the success of the project can be determined.

#### **Element 4 - Fuel and Weather Prescription**

Give an acceptable range for each parameter **as required**. At a minimum, the parameters indicated must include Air Temperature, Relative Humidity, 20-Foot Wind Speed, Wind Direction, **Mixing Height**, and 1-Hour Fuel Moisture.

The selection of the parameter ranges should be based on the conditions necessary to achieve the desired results in a safe and effective manner.

#### **Element 5 – Fire Behavior Prescription**

Give an acceptable range for each parameter. At a minimum, include parameters for Rate of Spread, Flame Length, and Probability of Ignition for each fuel type in the prescribed fire area.

This information should be used to determine which combinations of elements in the Fuel and Weather Prescription will result in unacceptable fire behavior. In many cases, burning under the extremes of all the Fuel and Weather Prescription parameters will not meet, and will most likely exceed, the Fire Behavior Prescription. Conditions must be in the “Acceptable” range indicated for both the Fuel and Weather Prescription and the Fire Behavior Prescription in order for the Prescribed Fire to be considered to be in prescription.

Holding and contingency plans must be developed with the consideration of the predicted fire outside of the prescribed fire area **on the hot end of the prescription**.

#### **Element 6 – Fire Behavior Narrative**

A narrative that summarizes fire behavior and the parameters effecting it must be included. Fire behavior modeling and or empirical evidence that supports the expected parameters should be added as an Attachment to the Prescribed Fire Plan. Also, describe the desired fire behavior and how fire behavior will be manipulated to meet resource objectives. This narrative should be correlated with Element 13, Firing Plan.

#### **Element 7 – Scheduling**

Describe the timing of when the prescribed fire needs to be completed. Consider time of year, time of day, season, etc. Also, discuss how the burn may affect the availability of wildfire suppression resources in the area.

#### **Element 8 – Assigned Resources & Equipment**

List all of the required resources that will be assigned to the burn and any specialized equipment that will be needed to accomplish the Prescribed Fire goals and objectives.

## **Element 9 – Pre-Burn Considerations**

Describe the on and off-site actions that need to be conducted prior to implementation. Examples include but are not limited to line to be constructed, preparation of critical holding points, snags to be felled, weather monitoring, timeframes and other responsibilities.

Methods and procedures for obtaining weather and smoke management forecasts should be detailed here. Spot weather forecasts are strongly recommended.

## **Element 10 – Test Fire**

Provisions for a test fire are required, and all results must be recorded. The purpose of a test fire is to verify that the prescribed fire behavior characteristics will meet management objectives and to verify smoke dispersal. In many situations, an analysis of the initial ignitions may provide adequate test fire results.

- A. Planned Location – Describe the part of the unit in which the test fire will occur. Include information on the procedures for igniting the test fire and how the results of the test fire will be evaluated. Test fires should be ignited in an area that is representative of the condition of the prescribed fire area.
- B. Test Fire Documentation – Results of the test fire should be observed and then documented in the Prescribed Fire Plan. This is important to establish a starting point for fire behavior observations and to document that the exhibited fire behavior was within the parameters established in the Fire Behavior Prescription. Also, make note of the weather conditions and compare them to the Fuel and Weather Prescription parameters to ensure that they are being met.

## **Element 11 – Firing Plan**

Describe planned ignition operations including firing methods, devices, techniques, sequences, patterns and staffing. Maps showing proposed ignition patterns may be included as an Attachment to the Prescribed Fire Plan. The appropriate firing plan will ensure that the plan objectives are met.

## **Element 12 – Holding Plan**

Describe the procedures that will be used to contain the fire within the burn unit boundaries that were established in Element 2. This element should also detail mop-up and patrol procedures. Describe any critical holding points and indicate them on the map

## **Element 13 – Monitoring**

Monitoring is required to ensure that the prescribed fire meets the objectives specified in the plan. Describe the monitoring that will be required and who will collect this information. At a minimum, weather, fire behavior, fuel conditions and smoke dispersal must be monitored once every 60 minutes during ignition operations.

### **Element 14 – Communication Plan**

Develop a Communication Plan that is specific to the project. Identify and assign command, tactical, air operations frequencies, and any repeaters that may be needed. This may be covered in an Incident Action Plan on the form ICS-205.

### **Element 15 – Contingency Plan**

The contingency plan is the portion of the Prescribed Fire Plan that considers possible but unlikely events and the contingency resources and actions needed to mitigate those events. At a minimum, a contingency plan must be developed to cover escaped fires and danger to the public from fire and smoke.

- A. Management action points –Management action points need to be established and followed for each scenario that may result in an escaped prescribed fire or danger to the public from fire and smoke. Management action points units will indicate when certain actions or additional suppression resources are needed. They should be based on things like weather and/or fuel conditions, fire behavior, smoke impacting a road/populated area, or resistance to control.
- B. Actions Needed – Describe the actions needed for each management action point. The Administrator must determine when they need to be notified depending on what actions are being taken.
- C. Contingency Resources and Reporting Times – List the contingency resources that will be needed for the actions listed above. Verify and document the availability and response times of the contingency resources on the day of the prescribed fire. Resources that have an indeterminate availability are not valid contingency resources.
- D. Wildfire Conversion –Any prescribed fire that escapes the burn unit that are established in Element #2 and cannot be controlled by the resources on hand and the specified contingency resources, must be declared a wildfire. Once this conversion has been made, immediate actions must be taken to suppress the wildfire. These actions will be listed in Element 16, Part B., above. This section should also define the ICS structure that will be used for suppression.

### **Element 16 – Sources of Emergency Assistance**

List all pertinent sources of emergency assistance and their contact numbers such as the Volunteer Fire Department covering the area, the District Forest Fire Warden, local Forest Fire Wardens and Crews.

### **Element 17 – Safety and Medical Plan**

Develop a Medical Plan that is specific to the project. Identify resources such as ambulances, hospitals etc. that will be used in the event of a medical emergency. Also list procedures for reporting and responding to medical emergencies and make them known to personnel assigned to the project. This may be part of an Incident Action Plan and included on ICS form 206.

## **Element 18 – Smoke Management Plan**

List and describe any smoke sensitive areas that may be affected by the project, taking into account not only the day of the project, but also on the following days. Identify smoke sensitive receptors, including population centers, recreation areas, hospitals, airports, transportation corridors, and schools. Also, describe desirable smoke behavior and smoke management actions.

An online simple smoke screening tool is an easy-to-use application that is recommended for everyone to see the potential downwind smoke impact area. It is located at:

<http://fireweather.fdacs.gov/Simple-Smoke/> The output will show the critical smoke impact (in red) and the smoke impact area of concern (in yellow). This tool is a good first step in understanding the potential impacts of a proposed burn.

Consider using emission reduction techniques (ERTs) for the prescribed fire. Key ERTs include reducing the fuel load and burning the minimum material to meet objectives, reducing fuel burned (for example, burn only the area needed and prevent the fire from spreading, extinguish the smoldering burns, burn prior to precipitation, or burn before litter falls), and increasing burning efficiency (for example, allow the material to dry before burning, minimize soil content in slash piles, burn in piles, or use a backing fire when grass is burned).

On larger burns, it is recommended that a smoke spotter be identified to observe the smoke from a distance and report any negative impacts.

**No burning** will be conducted in an area covered by an Air Quality Index (AQI) forecast when the forecast is 101 or above. This index takes into account both ozone and particulate matter (PM). If either are above the 101 thresholds, no burning will be conducted. Below 101 corresponds to an air quality action day code of green and yellow. The forecast can be found by contacting the regional DEP office or by using the US EPA AirNow website (<https://gispub.epa.gov/airnow/>) to view statewide Air Quality Index Forecast for Pennsylvania. Select the Forecast tab and zoom into the area of interest or use the search box in the upper right corner. Then, select “Forecast – Tomorrow” in the Contours box on the left side of screen. (See Appendix I for an example forecast and more details).

## **Element 19 – Notifications**

List all of the names and contact information for the notifications that must be made. Examples include, but are not limited to adjoining landowners, DEP Regional Office, county EMA offices, and local fire departments. The District Forest Fire Warden (or designee) must be notified on the day of the burn prior to ignition and also after the burn has been completed. Keep careful records of all notifications.

## **Element 20 – Evaluation**

Complete an evaluation immediately after the burn and also list any future monitoring that is planned.

**Element 21 – Go/No-Go Checklist (Appendix B)**

The NWCG Go/No-Go Checklist must be completed and signed by the Burn Boss on the day of the burn.

**Element 22 – Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating Worksheet (Appendix H)**

**Element 23 – List of Attachments to the Prescribed Fire Plan**

**List of Appendices to the Standards**

Appendix A – Prescribed Fire Plan Template

Appendix B – NWCG Go/No Go Checklist

Appendix C – Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Qualifications Standards

Appendix D – Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program

Appendix E – Pennsylvania Wildfire & Prescribed Fire Experience Log

Appendix F – Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry Districts Map

Appendix G – Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry – District Forest Fire Wardens

Appendix H – Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating Worksheet

Appendix I – Air Quality Forecast and DEP Regional Offices (by county)

Appendix A

**PENNSYLVANIA**  
**PRESCRIBED FIRE PLAN**

**Prescribed Fire Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency/Landowner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by:**

*Name:*

*Title:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

**Technical Reviewer:**

*Name:*

**Qualification:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

**Burn Day Burn Boss:**

*Name:*

*Title:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

**Administrator:**

*Name:*

*Title:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

**Burn Day Contact Information:**

Name:

Phone:

Plan expires 3 years from the date of the latest approval signature. (Indicate if this plan will be used for multiple treatments in the 3-year time frame.)

**1. LOCATION:**

Agency /Organization		Ownership	
County		Township	
Acres		Landscape	
Lat/Long		Forest District	

**2. PRESCRIBED FIRE AREA DESCRIPTION:**

**A) Burn Unit Narrative Description (include description of burn unit boundaries):**

**B) Burn Unit Description Table :**

Vegetation Types	Fire Behavior Fuel Model	% of Unit Area	% Slope	Aspect

**C) MAPS (include as attachments):**

Location map (public use or state highway):

Burn unit map (topo and/or photo map):

Timber type map: (optional)

Aerial photograph:

Soils Map: (optional)

Smoke Screening Map:

Other:

**3. PRESCRIBED FIRE JUSTIFICATION:**

	Fuel Reduction		Site Preparation		Wildlife Habitat
	Competing Vegetation Control		Invasive Species Control		Other
	Insect & Disease				

**Prescribed Fire Management Goal(s):**

**Specific Measurable Prescribed Fire Management Objectives:**

**Other Alternatives Considered:**

**4. FUEL AND WEATHER PRESCRIPTION (give ranges):**

<b>Parameters:</b>	<b>Acceptable (Required)</b>	
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>
*Air Temperature (°F)		
*Relative Humidity (%)		
Days Since Last Rain		
20 ft wind speed (mph)		
*Wind Direction(s)		
*Eye-level Windspeed (mph)		
*1-Hour Fuel Moisture (%)		
10-Hour Fuel Moisture (%)		
100-Hour Fuel Moisture (%)		
1000-Hour Fuel Moisture (%)		
*Atmospheric Mixing Height (ft)		
Other (e.g. KBDI, Live/dead ratio):		
Live Fuel Moisture (%)		

\* Required

**5. FIRE BEHAVIOR PRESCRIPTION**

(give ranges, add parameters for each fuel model as required):

Fuel Model	Parameters:	Acceptable (Required)	
		Min.	Max.
	*Rate of Spread		
	*Flame Length		
	*Probability of Ignition		
	*Rate of Spread		
	*Flame Length		
	*Probability of Ignition		
	*Rate of Spread		
	*Flame Length		
	*Probability of Ignition		

\*Required

**6. FIRE BEHAVIOR NARRATIVE (Describe *desired* fire behavior. How will you manipulate fire behavior to meet management and control objectives?):**

**7. SCHEDULING (Describe timing, time constraints)**

**8. ASSIGNED RESOURCES:**

**9. PRE-BURN CONSIDERATIONS:**

**10. TEST FIRE:**

**A) Planned Location:**

**B) Test Fire Documentation:**

a. **Weather Conditions:**

b. **Test Fire Results:**

**11. FIRING PLAN:**

**12. HOLDING PLAN:**

**13. MONITORING:**

**14. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:**

**15. CONTINGENCY PLAN:**

- A) Management action points:**
- B) Actions Needed:**
- C) Resources and Reporting Times:**
- D) Wildfire Conversion:**

**16. SOURCES OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (location & phone #):**

Fire:		
Law Enforcement:		
Medical:		
District Forest Fire Warden:		

**17. SAFETY & MEDICAL PLAN:**

**18. SMOKE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**19. NOTIFICATIONS (including, but not limited to):**

- Department of Environmental Protection:
- Airports:
- District Forest Fire Warden:
- Neighboring Landowners: (If within a certain distance)
- County Communications Center:
- Volunteer Fire Dept. having jurisdiction:

**20. EVALUATION:**

**21. GO/NO-GO CHECKLIST:**

**22. COMPLETED COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS AND JUSTIFICATION:**

**23. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:**

**Summary and Evaluation Immediately After Burn:**

Date burned		Time frame	
Rain		Days since	Inches of rain
Acres burned		Est. Cost	
Burn Boss			
Containment Problems			
Smoke Problems			
Est. Understory Consumed (%)			
Excessive Scorch			
Remarks			

Appendix B

**NWCG PRESCRIBED FIRE  
GO/NO-GO CHECKLIST**

Yes	No	Questions
		Are ALL fire prescription elements met?
		Are ALL smoke management specifications met?
		Has ALL required current and projected fire weather forecast been obtained and are they favorable?
		Are ALL planned operations personnel and equipment on-site, available, and operational?
		Has the availability of ALL contingency resources been checked, and are they available?
		Have ALL personnel been briefed on the project objectives, their assignment, safety hazards, escape routes, and safety zones?
		Have all the pre-burn considerations identified in the prescribed fire plan been completed or addressed?
		Have ALL the required notifications been made?
		Are ALL permits and clearances obtained?
		In your opinion, can the burn be carried out according to the prescribed fire plan and will it meet the planed objective?

If all the questions were answered “YES” proceed with the test fire. Document the current conditions, locations, and results.

Burn Boss: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

**Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Qualifications Standards**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Required Training*</b>	<b>Required Taskbook</b>	<b>Minimum Prerequisite Operational Period Experience</b>
<b>Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 1 – PA-RXB1</b>	S-490 Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations	Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 1 – PA-RXB1	3 as RXB1(T) 5 as RXB2
<b>Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 2 – PA-RXB2</b>	S-390 Intro to Fire Behavior Calculations RX-310 Introduction to Fire Effects <i>(recommended)</i> S-200 Initial Attack Incident Commander RX-410 <i>Smoke Management Techniques</i>	Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 2 – PA-RXB2	3 as RXB2(T) 3 as FIRB
<b>Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 – PA-RXB3** (Optional)</b>	<i>RX-300 Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (recommended)</i>	PA-RXB3	3 as RXB3(T) 3 as FIRB
<b>Pennsylvania Firing Boss – PA-FIRB</b>	S-219 Firing Operations <i>(recommended)</i> S-230 Crew Boss S-290 Intermediate Fire Behavior ICS-200 Basic ICS	Firing Boss – PA-FIRB	3 as FIRB(T) 3 as FFT1
<b>Pennsylvania Squad Boss – PA-FFT1</b>	S-131 Firefighter Type 1	Squad Boss – PA-FFT1	3 as FFT1(T) 3 as FFT2
<b>Certified Prescribed Burn Manager – CPBM (Optional)</b>	CPBM Course	CPBM Checklist	5 as FFT2
<b>Pennsylvania Firefighter – PA-FFT2</b>	S-130 Basic Firefighter S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior IS-700 National Incident Management System L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service ICS-100 Introduction to ICS	N/A	N/A

\*All courses must meet NWCG standards.

\*\* RXB3 is optional and not required to move into higher positions.

## Appendix D

# Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Program

## 1. Steps to becoming a Pennsylvania Certified Prescribed Burn Manager

- 1.1. Complete the following wildland fire training classes available online:  
S-130, S-190, I-100, L-180, and I-700  
S-130 requires an in-person field component for full completion which can be facilitated by a state agency or Prescribed Fire Council.
- 1.2. Successfully complete the Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Course
- 1.3. Must participate on a minimum of 5 burns as crew member. It is recommended that at least 3 of those be done prior to attending the CPBM Course. One wildfire assignment can be counted towards the five.
- 1.4. Complete the Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Certification Checklist on a minimum of 2 apprentice burns under the guidance and evaluation of a qualified CPBM or Burn Boss, within 3 years of course completion.
- 1.5. Once these steps are complete, an application packet for certification must be submitted to the Certification Review Board consisting of: CPBM course certificate, experience log, and completed Certification Checklist with recommendation for certification by at least 1 evaluator. **Email the packet to [tbreininge@pa.gov](mailto:tbreininge@pa.gov).** DCNR Bureau of Forestry with recommendation from the Board, will then issue a certification number to the applicant. There may be a fee associated with certification.

## 2. Maintaining Certification

Once qualified, the CPBM will be held to a currency and continuing education standard consisting of the following:

- 8 hours of training relevant to prescribed fire every 2 years.
  - Options for con-ed would include RT-130, Prescribed Fire Council Meeting, and workshops as determined by the Review Board.
- Lead 1 burn in a 3-year period

**DCNR will track the currency for CPBM's**

## 3. Qualification Equivalency

Qualified burn bosses under the current versions of the PA Prescribed Fire Qualification System (PA-RXB), NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications, or the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide System meet the requirements for burning on all lands in the state.

Burn Bosses under these systems may serve as evaluators for Apprentice CPBMs.

Individuals with burn manager credentials from other states will need to complete the certification process for Pennsylvania as outlined in this document. There is no reciprocity of certification with other states.

Individuals with prior experience and training may submit a request to the Board to review for certification.

#### **4. Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Course**

The CPBM course will span a minimum of 24 hours over 3 days using a combination of quizzes and exams to evaluate learning. A certificate will be issued at course completion. The course will cover the following topics:

Burn objectives, Legal considerations, public relations, safety, weather, fire behavior, smoke management, ecological effects, firing techniques, holding and contingencies (including fire suppression), planning and evaluation.

#### **5. Certification Checklist**

Apprentice CPBMs must complete a certification checklist, which requires qualified CPBM to observe and sign off on competency tasks. Checklists must be completed within 3 years of the training course.

#### **6. Certification Review Board**

The Certification Review Board (CRB) consists of 5 members: 1 from DCNR, 1 from PGC, and 3 members selected by the Council Board of Directors. At least 1 of these 3 members must be non-agency. The CRB meets at a minimum, quarterly, with 4 out of 5 members necessary for a quorum. Regular business includes reviewing and approving applications for certification, reviewing de-certification cases, keeping tabs on currency requirements, data entry and maintenance of the certification tracking system and approving continuing education.

#### **7. Burn Plans**

Burn plans under the CPBM system will follow the same requirements for submission to DCNR and DEP and required content will be the same as the Standards for government agencies.

#### **8. Complexity Restrictions**

Certified Prescribed Burn Managers may burn all units with a **LOW** complexity rating as determined through use of the Complexity Rating System Guidelines provided in the PA Standards. Burn units that score in the Moderate or High complexity categories would require a state or federally qualified Burn Boss (RXB).

## **9. System for Revoking Certification**

CPBM certification may be revoked for at least 1 year if a major violation is committed. These violations are similar to other states with point systems for revocation. The goal with this is to impart the high level of responsibility that is expected from burn managers. The Certification Review Board will make the determination on de-certification and steps needed to re-certify. Recertification would likely include retaking the CPBM course.

### **9.1. MAJOR VIOLATIONS**

- 9.1.1. Burning out of prescription
- 9.1.2. Burning without an approved burn plan
- 9.1.3. Falsifying information on CPBM paperwork.
- 9.1.4. Recurring pattern of negligence to safety or the CPBM program

## **10. Program Review and Revision**

The Certification Review Board will evaluate the program at least annually to ensure that requirements are adequate and reasonably meet the needs of users. Revision requests will be made through DCNR once approved by the Certification Board and the Council Board of Directors.

## Pennsylvania Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Certification Checklist

Apprentice burn managers must conduct at least 2 burns under the direct supervision of a qualified burn manager. The qualified burn managers will evaluate apprentice performance of essential tasks and initial those tasks when complete. The Evaluator will then sign off to recommend certification or an additional burn to improve on performance. Apprentice burn managers must understand that they may need more than 2 burns to prove competency of the position. This checklist must be completed within 3 years of CPBM course completion.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of CPBM Course Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

#	Task	Evaluator #1 Initials	Evaluator #2 Initials
1	Write a Burn Plan and get it reviewed by a qualified CPBM or state or federally qualified RXB prior to submission to DEP and DCNR.		
2	Well-prepared for the burn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed burn prescription</li> <li>• Arranged for adequate personnel on the burn crew</li> <li>• Checked fire weather</li> <li>• Made proper notifications</li> <li>• Inspected firelines</li> </ul>		
3	Thorough pre-burn briefing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear assignments given</li> <li>• Identified hazards and safety concerns</li> <li>• Discussed weather, objectives, contingency plan, medical plan</li> </ul>		
4	Burn conducted in safe, efficient, professional manner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stayed within prescription</li> <li>• Followed approved burn plan</li> <li>• Made appropriate Go/No Go decision</li> <li>• Used good strategy and tactics</li> <li>• Communicated clearly with crew</li> <li>• Recognized and corrected any potentially dangerous situations</li> </ul>		
5	Post Burn Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensured fire was out or safely contained</li> <li>• Evaluated burn objectives</li> <li>• Conducted debrief with crew</li> <li>• Made post-burn notifications</li> </ul>		

Evaluator #1 and Burn #1 Information

<b>Evaluator Name</b>		<b>Burn Date</b>	
<b>Qualification (If CPBM, provide #)</b>		<b>Unit Name/Location</b>	
<b>Address</b>		<b>City/Town</b>	
<b>Phone</b>		<b>DCNR Burn Plan #</b>	
<b>Email</b>		<b>Acres Burned</b>	
		<b>Fuel Type</b>	

Evaluator Recommendation and Signature

- Apprentice performed all tasks to satisfaction. I recommend this person for certification.
- Apprentice requires additional experience to improve competency in one or more tasks.

Notes:

Evaluator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator #2 and Burn #2 Information

<b>Evaluator Name</b>		<b>Burn Date</b>	
<b>Qualification (If CPBM, provide #)</b>		<b>Unit Name/Location</b>	
<b>Address</b>		<b>City/Town</b>	
<b>Phone</b>		<b>DCNR Burn Plan #</b>	
<b>Email</b>		<b>Acres Burned</b>	
		<b>Fuel Type</b>	

Evaluator Recommendation and Signature

- Apprentice performed all tasks to satisfaction. I recommend this person for certification.
- Apprentice requires additional experience to improve competency in one or more tasks.

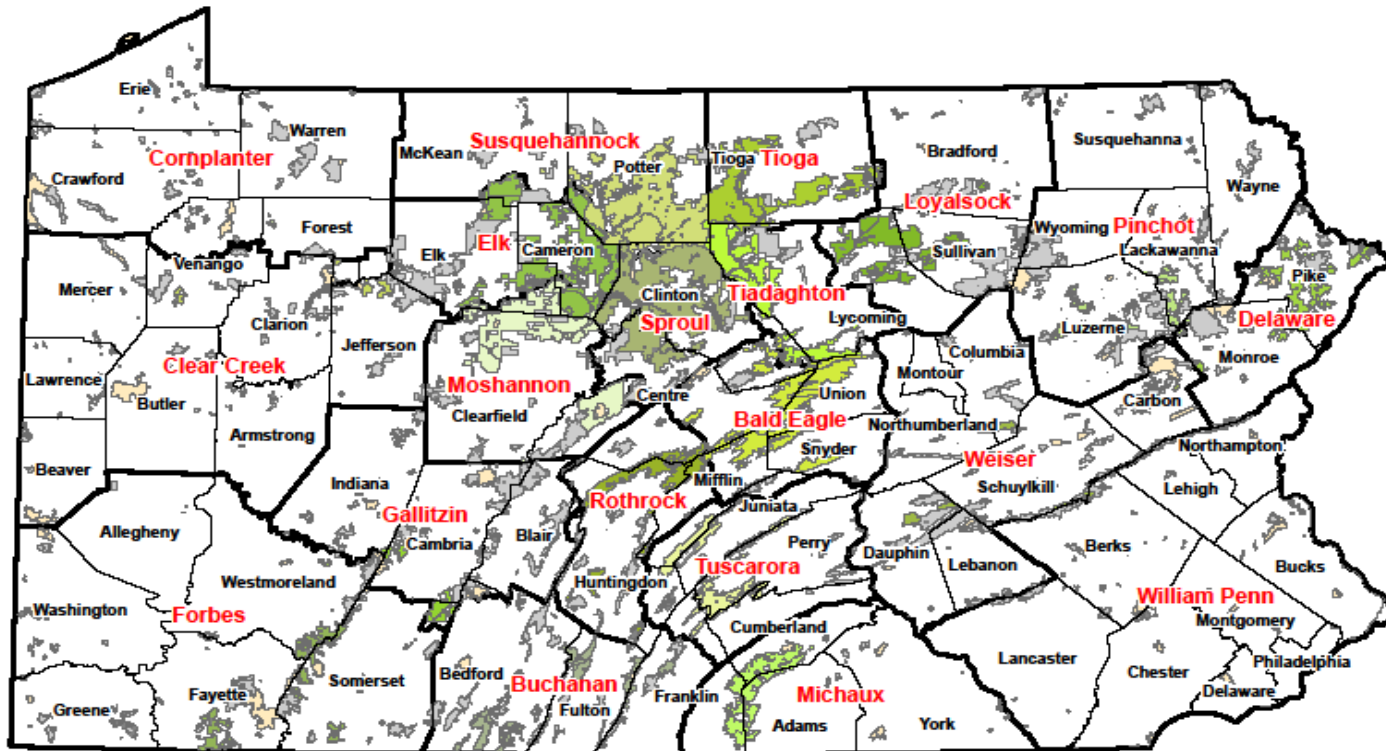
Notes:

Evaluator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix F – Map of Forest Districts



## Appendix G - Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry – District Forest Fire Wardens

- #1 **MICHAUX** -10099 Lincoln Way East, Fayetteville, PA 17222-9609, **717-352-2211**, **FAX:** 717-352-3007
- #2 **BUCHANAN** -25185 Great Cove Road, McConnellsburg, PA 17233-8204, **717-485-3148**, **FAX:** 717-485-9283
- #3 **TUSCARORA** - 4455 Big Spring Road, Blain, PA 17006-9434, **717-536-3191**, **FAX:** 717-536-3335
- #4 **FORBES** - PO Box 519, Laughlintown, PA 15655-0519, **724-238-1200**, **FAX:** 724-238-5000, **Del:** 1291 Route 30
- #5 **ROTHROCK** - 181 Rothrock Lane, Huntingdon, PA 16652, **814-643-2340**, **FAX:** 814-643-6304
- #6 **GALLITZIN** - P.O. Box 506, Ebensburg, PA 15931-0506, **814-472-1862**, **FAX:** 814-472-1876, **Del:** 155 Hillcrest Drive
- #7 **BALD EAGLE** - 18865 Old Turnpike Road, Millmont, PA 17845, **570-922-3344**, **FAX:** 570-922-4696
- #8 **CLEAR CREEK** - 158 South Second Avenue, Clarion, PA 16214, **814-226-1901**, **FAX:** 814-226-1704
- #9 **MOSHANNON** - 3372 State Park Road, Penfield, PA 15849-1722, **814-765-0821**, **FAX:** 814-765-0621
- #10 **SPROUL** - 15187 Renovo Road, Renovo, PA 17764, **570-923-6011**, **FAX:** 570-923-6014
- #11 **PINCHOT** - 1839 Abington Rd, North Abington Twp., PA 18414-9753, **570-945-7133**, **FAX:** 570-945-7249
- #12 **TIADAGHTON** – 10 Lower Pine Bottom Road, Waterville, PA 17776, **570-753-5409**, **FAX:** 570-753-5721
- #13 **ELK**, - 258 Sizerville Road, Emporium, PA 15834, **814-486-3353**, **FAX:** 814-486-5617
- #14 **CORNPLANTER** - 323 N. State Street, North Warren, PA 16365-4867, **814-723-0262**, **FAX:** 814-723-0270
- #15 **SUSQUEHANNOCK** - 3150 East Second Street, Coudersport, PA 16915-0673, **814-274-3600**, **FAX:** 814-274-7459
- #16 **TIOGA** - One Nessmuk Lane, Wellsboro, PA 16901, **570-724-2868**, **FAX:** 570-724-6575
- #17 **WILLIAM PENN** - 845 Park Road, Elverson, PA 19520-9523, **610-582-9660**, **FAX:** 610-582-9692
- #18 **WEISER** - P.O. Box 315, Aristes, PA 17920, **570-875-6450**, **FAX:** 570-875-3605
- #19 **DELAWARE** - 2391 Resica Falls Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18302, **570-895-4000** or **4001**, **FAX:** 570-895-4041
- #20 **LOYALSOCK** - 6735 Route 220, Dushore, PA 18614-8101, **570-946-4049**, **FAX:** 570-946-4059

Appendix H

**PENNSYLVANIA PRESCRIBED FIRE COMPLEXITY RATING WORKSHEET**

<b>Site:</b>	<b>Unit:</b>	<b>Agency:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Complexity Score (circle)</b>			
<i>Low (44-80 pts)</i>	<i>Moderate (81-150 pts)</i>	<i>High (151-220 pts)</i>	

**Weighting Factor x Complexity Value = Total points. Sum of Total points = Complexity Score. Assign each complexity value as a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.**

Complexity Element	Weighting Factor	Complexity Value (1-5)	Total Points	<i><b>Rationale and/or Mitigation Procedures</b></i> (Use for clarification of rationale and/or Complexity Value.)
<b>1. Safety</b>	5			
<b>2. Difficulty of Containment</b>	5			
<b>3. Fuels and Fire Behavior</b>	5			
<b>4. Wildland / Urban Interface</b>	5			
<b>5. Objectives</b>	4			
<b>Sub Total (Page 1)</b>				

Complexity Element	Weighting Factor	Complexity Value (1-5)	Total Points	<i><u>Rationale and/or Mitigation Procedures</u></i>
<b>6. Management Organization</b>	4			
<b>7. Contingency Planning and Resources</b>	4			
<b>8. Natural, Cultural, Social Values</b>	3			
<b>9. Air Quality Values</b>	3			
<b>10. Logistics</b>	3			
<b>11. Tactical Operations</b>	2			
<b>12. Cooperator Coordination</b>	1			
<b>Sub Total</b>	Page 2		<b>Additional Comments:</b>	
	Page 1			
<b>Complexity Score</b>				<b>Rated by:</b>

Complexity Element	Complexity Value Evaluation Examples (Not all items necessarily need to be present)		
	1	3	5
<b>1. Safety</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All safety issues have been identified and mitigated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of significant issues have been identified and some of them are difficult to address through mitigation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complex safety issues exist.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Difficulty of Containment</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low threat of escape past unit boundaries.</li> <li>Probability of Ignition&lt;50%.</li> <li>Boundaries naturally defensible or firebreaks easily installed and defended.</li> <li>Secondary control lines strong and easily accessed by vehicles and/or crew.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate threat of escape from unit boundaries.</li> <li>50&lt;Probability of Ignition&lt;70%</li> <li>Moderate risk of slopover or spot fires.</li> <li>Fuel type produces numerous firebrands.</li> <li>Secondary control lines difficult to access or not secure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High threat of escape from unit boundaries.</li> <li>Probability of Ignition&gt;70%.</li> <li>High risk of slopover or spot fires.</li> <li>Secondary control lines non-existent or inadequate without significant resource commitment.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Fuels and Fire Behavior</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low variability in slope &amp; aspect.</li> <li>Weather uniform and predictable.</li> <li>Surface fuels (grass and/or needles) only.</li> <li>No drought present or predicted within burn period.</li> <li>Duff or organic soils will not ignite.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate variability in slope &amp; aspect.</li> <li>Weather variable but predictable.</li> <li>Ladder fuels present and torching expected.</li> <li>Fuel types/loads variable.</li> <li>Dense, tall shrub or mid-seral forest communities.</li> <li>Drought index indicates normal to moderate drought conditions; present expected within burn period.</li> <li>Upper level of duff or organic soil will burn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High variability in slope &amp; aspect.</li> <li>Weather variable and difficult to predict.</li> <li>Extreme fire behavior and/or stand replacement fire.</li> <li>Fuel types/loads highly variable.</li> <li>Altered fire regime, hazardous fuel /stand density conditions.</li> <li>Drought index indicates severe drought conditions; present or expected within burn period.</li> <li>Significant portions duff or organic soils will burn.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Wildland / Urban Interface</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No risk to people or property within or adjacent to fire, or values to be protected are easily mitigated.</li> <li>Potential damage from escape low.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several values to be protected.</li> <li>Mitigation through planning and/or preparations is complex.</li> <li>May require some commitment of specialized resources.</li> <li>Potential damage from escape moderate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous values and/or high values to be protected.</li> <li>Severe damage likely without significant commitment of specialized resources with appropriate skill levels.</li> <li>Potential damage from escape high.</li> </ul>

Complexity Element	Complexity Value Evaluation Examples (Not all items necessarily need to be present)		
	1	3	5
<b>5. Objectives</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescriptions broad.</li> <li>• Easily achieved objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of both live and dead fuels.</li> <li>• Moderate to substantial changes in two or more strata of vegetation.</li> <li>• Objectives judged to be moderately hard to achieve.</li> <li>• Objectives may require moderately intense fire behavior.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precise treatment of fuels and multiple ecological objectives.</li> <li>• Major change in the structure of 2 or more vegetative strata.</li> <li>• Conflicts between objectives and constraints.</li> <li>• Requires a high intensity fire or a combination of fire intensities that are difficult to achieve.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Management Organization</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Span of control held to 2 - 3.</li> <li>• 6 - 12 person crew and 1 - 2 engines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Span of control held to 4 - 5.</li> <li>• Multiple resources required (engines, dozers, terra torch, etc.).</li> <li>• 8 - 20 person crew and 1 - 3 engines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Span of control greater than 5 - 7.</li> <li>• Multiple branch, divisions or groups.</li> <li>• Specialized resources needed to accomplish objectives.</li> <li>• Organized management team required (Fire Use or Incident Management).</li> </ul>
<b>7. Contingency Planning and Resources</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate contingency resources on site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingency resources limited or have more than a 15 - 30 minutes response time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingency resources limited or have more than a 30+ minutes response time.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Natural, Cultural, and Social Values</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No risk to natural, cultural, and/or social resources within or adjacent to fire, or mitigation through planning and preparations is adequate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several values to be protected.</li> <li>• Mitigation through planning and/or preparations is complex.</li> <li>• May require some commitment of specialized resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numerous values and/or high values to be protected.</li> <li>• Severe damage likely without significant commitment of specialized resources with appropriate skill levels.</li> </ul>
<b>9. Air Quality Values</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few smoke sensitive areas near fire.</li> <li>• Smoke produced for 1 or fewer burning periods.</li> <li>• Air quality agencies generally require only initial notification and/or permitting.</li> <li>• No potential for scheduling conflicts with cooperators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple smoke sensitive areas, but smoke impact mitigated in plan.</li> <li>• Smoke produced for 2-3 burning periods.</li> <li>• Infrequent consultation with air quality agencies is needed.</li> <li>• Low potential for scheduling conflicts with cooperators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple smoke sensitive areas with complex mitigation actions required.</li> <li>• Health or visibility complaints likely.</li> <li>• Smoke produced for greater than 3 burning periods.</li> <li>• Smoke sensitive Class I air-sheds.</li> <li>• Frequent consultation with air quality agencies is needed.</li> <li>• High potential for scheduling conflicts with cooperators.</li> </ul>

Complexity Element	Complexity Value Evaluation Examples (Not all items necessarily need to be present)		
	1	3	5
<b>10. Logistics</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access.</li> <li>• Duration of fire is 1 day (holding or monitoring).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult access.</li> <li>• Duration of fire support between 2 and 3 days.</li> <li>• Logistical position assigned.</li> <li>• Anticipated difficulty in obtaining resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No vehicle access.</li> <li>• Duration of support is greater than 3 days.</li> <li>• Multiple logistical positions assigned.</li> <li>• High difficulty in obtaining resources.</li> </ul>
<b>11. Tactical Operations</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple ignition patterns with only one igniter inside the unit.</li> <li>• Ignition complete within one burning period.</li> <li>• Single ignition method used.</li> <li>• Resources required for 1 day.</li> <li>• Holding requirements minimal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple firing methods and/or sequences with two igniters inside the unit at once.</li> <li>• Use of specialized ignition methods (i.e., terra-torch or Premo-Mark III).</li> <li>• Ignition continues for two burning periods.</li> <li>• Resources required for 2 to 3 days.</li> <li>• Holding actions to direct or delay fire spread.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex firing patterns highly dependent upon local conditions.</li> <li>• Simultaneous use of multiple firing methods and/or sequences, greater than 2 igniters inside unit.</li> <li>• Simultaneous ground and aerial ignition.</li> <li>• Use of heli-torch.</li> <li>• Resources required for over 3 days.</li> <li>• Multiple mitigation actions at variable temporal and spatial points identified.</li> <li>• Aerial support for mitigation actions desirable or necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Cooperator Coordination</b>  <b>Weighting Factor - 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperators not involved in operations.</li> <li>• No concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple joint-jurisdiction fires.</li> <li>• Some competition for resources.</li> <li>• Some concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex multi-jurisdictional fires.</li> <li>• High competition for resources.</li> <li>• High concerns.</li> </ul>

The forecast for the entire Commonwealth is available on the US EPA AirNow website (<https://gispub.epa.gov/airnow/>). Select the Forecast tab and zoom into the area of interest or use the search box in the upper right corner. select “Forecast – Tomorrow” in the Contours box on the left side of screen. See Figure 1 below for an example showing an Air Quality forecast map from the AirNow website.

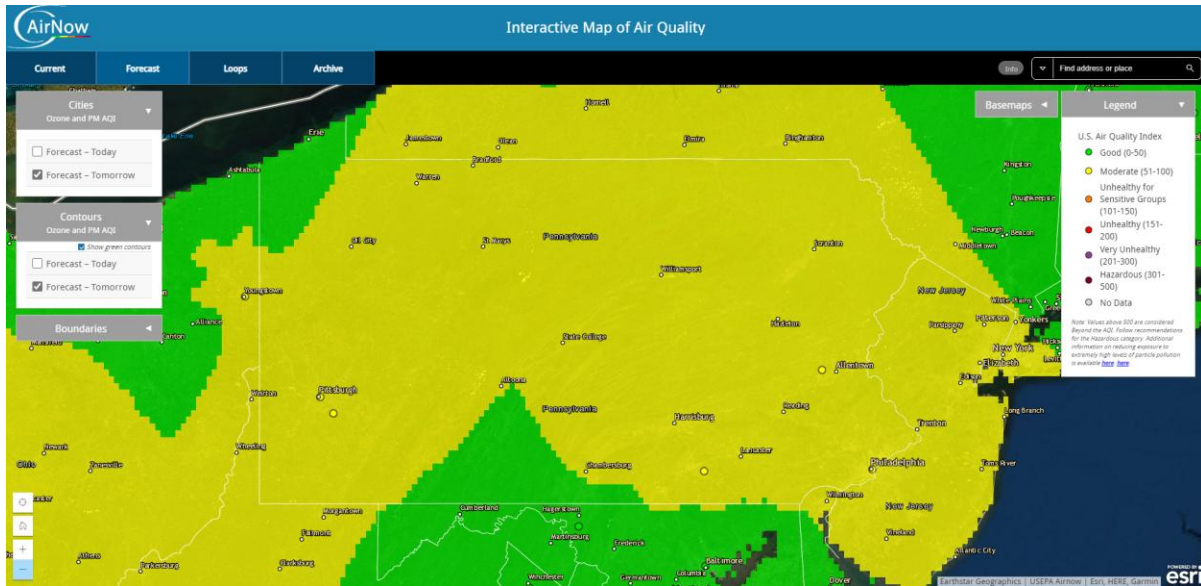
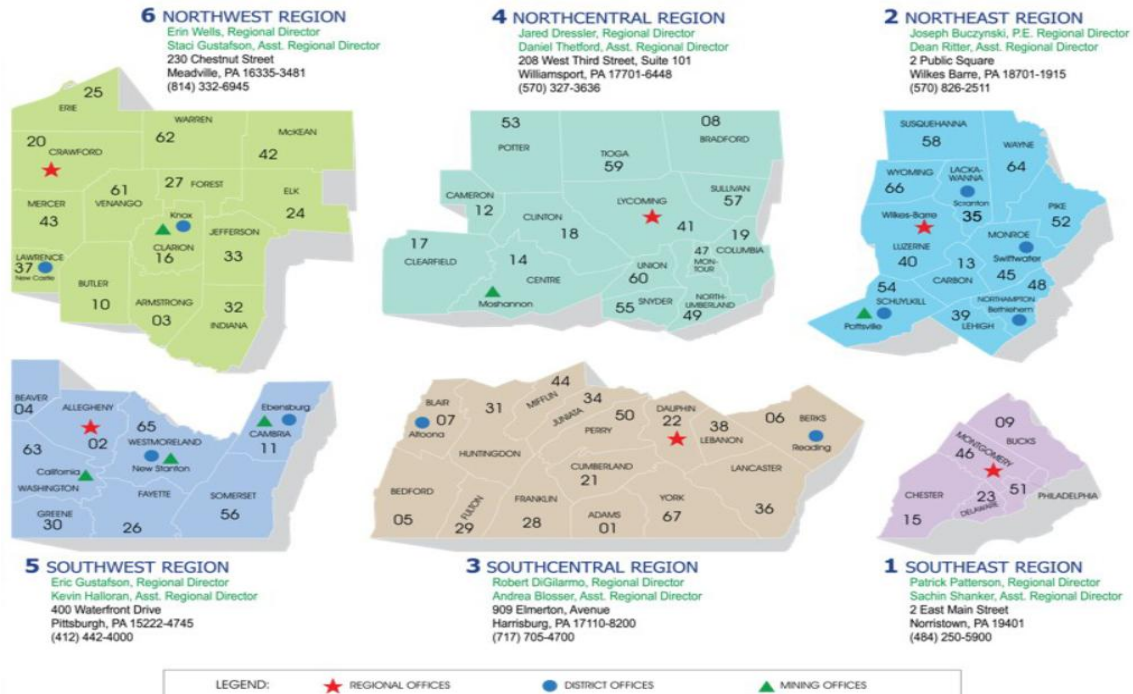


Figure 1: Example of an Air Quality Forecast for Pennsylvania on the AirNow website.

The forecasts are color coded based on the following Air Quality Index scale:

Color	Air Quality Index	Air Quality	Burning/No Burning
Green	0-50	Good	Burning
Yellow	51-100	Moderate	Burning
Orange	101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	No Burning
Red	151-200	Unhealthy	No Burning
Purple	201-300	Very Unhealthy	No Burning
Maroon	>300	Hazardous	No Burning

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Environmental Protection  
REGIONAL OFFICES**



To ensure awareness in case citizen calls are received, please notify the appropriate DEP regional office at least 24 hours prior of a prescribed fire through the [OnBase Electronic Forms Public Upload System](#).

REGION	CONTACT	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL
1 SE	Helen Morris, AQ Env. Group Manager	(484) 250-7518	<a href="mailto:RA-EPSEROAQREPORTS@pa.gov">RA-EPSEROAQREPORTS@pa.gov</a>
2 NE	Andy Schweitzer, AQ Ops Chief	(570) 826-5547	<a href="mailto:aschweitze@pa.gov">aschweitze@pa.gov</a>
3 SC	Kelley Matty, AQ Ops Chief	(717) 705-4877	<a href="mailto:kmatty@pa.gov">kmatty@pa.gov</a>
4 NC	Andrea Ryder, AQ District Supervisor	(570) 321-6580	<a href="mailto:aryder@pa.gov">aryder@pa.gov</a>
5 SW	Stephen Wiedemer, AQ Ops Chief	(412) 442-4190	<a href="mailto:swiedemer@pa.gov">swiedemer@pa.gov</a>
6 NW	Lynn Khalife, AQ Ops Chief	(814) 332-6635	<a href="mailto:mkhalife@pa.gov">mkhalife@pa.gov</a>

DEP Central Office Contact: Lucas Hershey, Air Quality Program Specialist  
[luchershey@pa.gov](mailto:luchershey@pa.gov)  
Phone: (717) 787-7019

Bureau of Forestry Contact: Todd Breininge, Program Specialist  
[tbreininge@pa.gov](mailto:tbreininge@pa.gov)  
Phone: (717) 772-0255

## DEP Burn Plan & Burn Day Notification Instructions

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has changed the notification process for burn plans and on the day of the burn. We will no longer be emailing them the plans and calling them as part of our burn day notifications. Effective February 3rd, all notifications will go through the [OnBase Electronic Forms Public Upload System](#)

### Instructions for the initial notification 25 working days prior to the burn

Once on the site click on the “Public Upload with Payment” link in the first paragraph. Next, click No for “is this a resubmittal?”

Enter Submitter Information.

Submitters Organization: Your name or organization

### Under Submission Information

Filter Submission Types by Program – Air Quality

Submission Type – Air Quality Report or Miscellaneous Submission (no payment)

DEP Program Area – Air Quality AQ

Request Type – Other

Permit #/Project # - Type in “Prescribed Burn Plan”

EIN – Leave this blank

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://greenport.pa.gov/ePermitPublicAccess/PublicSubmission/Home>. The page title is "Public Upload". The form contains the following fields:

- Phone Number\*: (717) 773-8011
- Submission Information: A green header bar.
- Filter Submission Types by Program (optional): A dropdown menu with "1 selected".
- Submission Type - Select from the list\*: A dropdown menu with "Air Quality Report or Miscellaneous Submission (. . .)" selected. A red arrow points to this dropdown.
- DEP Program Area: A dropdown menu with "AIR QUALITY AQ" selected. A red arrow points to this dropdown.
- Request Type\*: A dropdown menu with "OTHER" selected. A red arrow points to this dropdown.
- Permit #/Project #: A text input field with "Prescribed Fire Plan" entered. A red arrow points to this field.
- Applicant EIN: A text input field.
- Project Address: A green header bar.

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the text: "Need help? [Contact Us](#)" and "Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Rachel Carson Building | 400 Market Street | Harrisburg, PA 17101". The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screen.

## Project Address Information

Enter Project Address Information. If you don't have a physical address, just get it close.

County/Municipal/Region: If it is a burn plan submittal just use the County/Municipality that has the most acreage in it. The important thing is to make sure that it goes to the correct DEP Regional Office (circled below).

County(ies)	Municipality(ies)	Is Primary?	Region(s)	Edit	Delete
Lehigh	North Whitehall Township	N	Northeast Regional Office		

Attach the burn plan and click Submit.

## **Instructions for the burn day notification**

Do the same thing as above and click on the "Public Upload with Payment" link in the first paragraph. Next, click **No** for "is this a resubmittal?"

The only changes in the first section from the initial submission will be:

Permit #/Project # - Type in "Prescribed Burn Notification"

## Project Address Information

If the burn unit crosses County/Municipalities click on the Add County/Municipality/Region link to add the additional County/Municipalities.

Attach the burn plan to the submission and let them know the number of acres that are to be burned and how many units.

## **Additional Notification for Allegheny County**

The Allegheny County Health Department requires an open burning permit for all burns in the county. To apply, applicants must use the [ACHD Open Burn Portal Link](#) to apply for open burning permits. If you have any questions regarding prescribed burning in Allegheny County, please call 412-578-8120.