

# Barton Hills Neighborhood Association

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## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: Melissa Hawthorne**  
**PHONE: 512.560.0004**

### **Extreme Fire Danger Campaign Launched by Barton Hills Neighborhood** *Residents Prepare for ACL Festival Visitors to the Greenbelt*

AUSTIN, Texas – In response to the Austin City Limits (ACL) Festival annual event, Barton Hills neighborhood has launched a campaign on fire danger awareness to inform visitors to Austin of the extremely dry conditions occurring this year.

Residents of Barton Hills neighborhood recently coordinated efforts to design and post signs alerting visitors to Zilker Park and Barton Creek Greenbelt of the extremely high fire danger in the area.

The signs, which display bold lettering on a red and white background announce: “Extreme Fire Danger; No Smoking, Grilling, Campfires. To Report call 911. For more information visit [www.bartonhills.org](http://www.bartonhills.org).”

The signs are intended to catch people’s attention, be easily read, make sense, provide solid information for reporting abuse, and also provide a web source for additional information about the fire danger in Austin. Barton Hills Neighborhood Association is proud of their hometown event and want people to have a good time while in town, yet be very mindful of the extreme fire danger.

“Since our neighborhood is immediately adjacent to Austin’s beautiful Zilker Park and the Barton Creek Greenbelt, it is our responsibility to be very proactive.” said Melissa Hawthorne, vice president of the Barton Hills Neighborhood Association. “Our community would suffer great losses if a wildfire were to occur in the Greenbelt.”

Austin parks Director Sara Hensley issued a directive in April 2011, banning smoking, charcoal and wood grilling, and campfires in all Austin parklands. As a result, the ACL Festival in Zilker Park, is a non-smoking event this year for the first time in 10 years, and festival-goers will be asked to extinguish their cigarettes if seen smoking. They possibly risk being evicted from the festival with non-compliance.

“We are very pleased with the cooperation demonstrated by the ACL Festival producers, C3 Presents, Austin Parks and Recreation, Austin’s first responders and local media to elevate this issue and help enforce the burn ban in the park. We want to insure people understand the extremely dry conditions and the affect a fire would have to our community,” Hawthorne stated.

The devastating and deadly Labor Day fires around Austin prompted Barton Hills residents to action in an effort to protect their homes, property and families. Posting the signs in the Greenbelt, at trailhead entrances and around the neighborhood was the first step.

Neighborhood residents and visitors to the greenbelt are encouraged to be watchful and diligent for any indication of smoke or fires, and always with a ‘nose to the breeze’ to detect smoke.

“Because of the canopy of trees in Barton Creek, fires may go undetected unless you smell them first,” said regular Greenbelt visitor and Barton Hills resident, Samuel Hopkins. “It is imperative to use all your senses in identifying a fire’s location, and smelling the smoke is the first alert.”

People are urged to call 911 if a hint of smoke is seen or smelled in and around the Greenbelt. Barton Hills residents who live immediately adjacent to the Greenbelt will be on high alert, looking for suspicious activity and any resulting cigarette smoking, BBQ grilling and campfires. If a GPS system is used to provide the location of a fire, first responders will have more accurate details for their response.

Barton Hills neighborhood extends the length of Barton Creek from the Barton Springs Pool and Zilker Park, south to Gus Fruh Park, reaching almost to Loop 360. Naturally occurring grasses, vegetation and trees are alarmingly dry and brittle. All citizens of, and visitors to Austin are urged to be mindful of the burn ban, and watchful for any signs of smoke.

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