

SAFETY MESSAGE

Texas Forest Service Texas Winter Fire Season 2008

**During the 2006 Fire Season:
Seven local firefighters suffered severe burns on wildland fires**

**Extremely dangerous conditions exist when certain weather
thresholds are crossed**

The Situation:

- ★ Near record amounts of freeze cured grasses across the state
- ★ La Nina weather conditions are bringing above normal temperatures and below normal rain for the western half of the state
- ★ Regular frontal passages are bringing high winds and low relative humidity that cause explosive fire behavior

Major Hazards and Risks:

- ★ Under **Red flag** conditions, expect erratic and intense **Fire behavior** and fast moving flame fronts.
- ★ With **30 mph winds** expect spread rates of **450 feet per minute (5 miles per hour)** and average **flame lengths of 18 feet**
- ★ This time of year it's common for wind directions and speeds to switch suddenly when associated with a frontal passage.
- ★ Any change in wind speed or direction will have an **immediate impact** on flame lengths and rates of spread in fine (grass) fuels.

Attempting a direct frontal assault on head of the fire should not be employed

Attack from the Black whenever possible

- ★ Maintain Situational awareness of weather, fire behavior and other fire resources
- ★ Maintain communications with all your resources, before, during and after the fire

TFS has **Attack From the Black** wildland fire safety DVDs that are free to Texas fire departments. These can be ordered at the following email address:

attackfromtheblack@tfs.tamu.edu