

# SAP 34.99.99.T0.02 Homecoming Bonfire



Approved: April 14, 2014  
Next Scheduled Review: April 14, 2019

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## Procedure Statement

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The safety and protection of students, faculty, staff and all who participate in the homecoming bonfire tradition is a high priority at Tarleton State University.

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## Reason for Procedure

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The purpose of this standard administrative procedure is to provide direction and to clarify responsibilities associated with the safety and construction of Tarleton's homecoming bonfire.

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## Procedures and Responsibilities

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### 1. CONSTRUCTION, STRUCTURE & DIMENSIONS

- 1.1. The dimensions of the bonfire shall not exceed the following:
  - 1.1.1. Site 1 – College Farm (75 feet diameter, 50 feet high, plus the height of the topper)
  - 1.1.2. Site 2 – City of Stephenville Park (40 feet diameter, 20 feet high, plus the height of the topper)
  - 1.1.3. The size may be reduced if existing conditions compromise the safety of participants.
- 1.2. The university president or designee will approve the size request for a proposed bonfire at the College Farm. The City of Stephenville fire marshal (fire marshal) will approve the size request for a proposed bonfire to be located at the City Park.
- 1.3. The bonfire will be constructed of pallets stacked in a circular (wedding cake) pattern. A center pole (College Farm location) or stake (City Park location) will be set prior to any construction.
- 1.4. The circumference will be marked on the ground with spray paint.

- 1.5. A row of pallets will be laid around the entire diameter to form a starting point.
- 1.6. From that point, pallets will be overlapped creating a lacing affect. The first section of pallets will be placed. Each tier will not exceed 10 feet in height.
- 1.7. At approximately 10 feet, the pallets will be moved in half a pallet width to the center pole or stake. The lacing of pallets will continue at this diameter with the next tier not to exceed 10 feet in height. The lacing of pallets will continue upward toward the center of the stake.
- 1.8. Any remaining pallets must be relocated away from the bonfire site.
- 1.9. Typically, site work is not allowed after midnight. Extenuating circumstances will require a request for approval from the vice president for student life and dean of students (VPSL) at the College Farm location. Building is not allowed after midnight at the City Park location.
- 1.10. Signs submitted by student organizations must be delivered to the bonfire site at the College Farm before 12:00 noon on the day of the bonfire and placed on the stack, by the Plowboys prior to the diesel soak. No student organizational signs will be allowed on the stack at the City Park.
- 1.11. The site will be cleared of any additional debris prior to the diesel soak. A safe perimeter will be plowed around the bonfire and marked with white chalk. Once the bonfire is lit, no one is to be within this perimeter. After the fire is lit, appropriate staff, the Plowboys and University Police will move people back as the fire increases in size and the safe perimeter changes.
- 1.12. A representative from Tarleton's Office of Risk Management and Safety (RMS), Facilities Services or the City of Stephenville Parks and Recreation will soak the stack the day of the bonfire.
- 1.13. RMS and the fire marshal will establish an inspection schedule at the initial meeting.

## 2. CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

The following guidelines will be adhered to in preparing for the bonfire each fall. Depending on the fall schedule, adjustments to the timeline will be made.

### 2.1. Preconstruction Requirements

- 2.1.1. A pre-construction/safety procedures meeting will be held with the Plowboys, RMS, and the Division of Student Life (College Farm location). City fire marshal and Director of Parks and Recreation will attend if held at City Park.

- 2.1.1.1. Determination of additional lighting needs at selected site for greater safety.

2.1.2. The meeting will establish date(s)/time(s) and responsible party for the following:

- Plowboys access to site
- Site grading completion
- Activity permits filed with Student Activities
- Contact names and numbers provided to Student Activities
- Contacting potential pallet donors
- City facilities for use by construction workers
- Safety training for Plowboys
- Student organizational sign delivery (College Farm location only)
- Erath County Sheriff's Office will be notified (College Farm location)
- Routine patrol and role of Stephenville Police Department (SPD), University Police Department (UPD) and on-site security
- Food/supply delivery by recognized student organizations
- Alumni event on site

2.1.3. Diesel soak – RMS, City of Stephenville or Facilities Maintenance

2.1.4. Sound system delivery – Facilities Maintenance

2.1.5. Safety training will be conducted before anyone assists with site activities – RMS

Safety training will be conducted by RMS for those lighting the bonfire, which normally includes the President and his wife, the vice president of student life and dean of students (VPSL), the student body president and vice president, the two SGA homecoming chairs, two members of the Plowboys, and one representative each from the football team, cheerleaders, the band and the Purple Poo.

2.1.6. Waivers will be signed, including emergency information, and filed with Office of Student Activities – Plowboys

2.1.7. No alcohol/no visitor signs are posted – Plowboys

2.1.8. Site grading complete – Plowboys

2.1.9. Paint diameter of bonfire around center stake – Plowboys/RMS

2.2. Construction Requirements

2.2.1. Command post is established/accountability board in place – Plowboys/RMS

2.2.2. City or County fire department will be contacted that construction has begun - RMS

- 2.2.3. Work schedule is established and posted – Plowboys
- 2.2.4. 24 hour guarding of bonfire will begin – Plowboys
- 2.2.5. Stacking of pallets will begin – Plowboys
- 2.2.6. Campus Control will be notified of bonfire rules/access (College Farm location only) – Homecoming Chair
- 2.3. Day of Bonfire
  - 2.3.1. Signs are accepted from student organizations and placed on the bonfire – Plowboys
  - 2.3.2. Final inspection – RMS
  - 2.3.3. Site is cleared of all trash – Plowboys
  - 2.3.4. Trash and recycling receptacles delivered to site – Facilities Maintenance
  - 2.3.5. Stage is decorated (College Farm location) – SGA representatives
  - 2.3.6. Additional pallets are removed from site – Plowboys
- 2.4. Following Bonfire
  - 2.4.1. County fire trucks will be asked to douse the remaining coals and ashes from the bonfire. Tarleton will refill the trucks from a Tarleton fire hydrant. (Equine or Swine Barn areas.)
  - 2.4.2. The bonfire site will be cleared of all people, including Plowboys, by 12:00 midnight and gates will be closed and secured by University Police.
  - 2.4.3. Facilities Maintenance will clear site of any debris that cannot be removed by Plowboy members by Wednesday of the week following the bonfire.

### 3. SAFETY & PROCEDURES

- 3.1. Everyone participating in the construction of the bonfire is required to attend a safety meeting prior to entering the bonfire site to begin building. The meeting will potentially include the following topics:
  - Proper use of accountability board
  - Proper use of fire extinguishers
  - Proper lifting techniques
  - Legal aspects of hauling brush/pallets
  - Proper procedures for constructing the stack
  - Emergency procedures
  - Proper clothing

- Location of all safety equipment
  - Access to site/visitation schedule
- 3.2. Everyone who is involved in building or collecting material is required to sign a liability waiver and complete an emergency contact information form prior to participating. A copy of the emergency contact information will be on site, in the Tarleton Control Center, and in the University Police Department throughout the duration of bonfire activities.
  - 3.3. The Plowboys, in conjunction with on-site security, are in charge of the bonfire work site.
  - 3.4. The Plowboys are responsible for ensuring that construction participants adhere to set safety rules and procedures. The Plowboys will give instructions in a respectful manner.
  - 3.5. Only Plowboys, Plowboy recruits and other authorized personnel are allowed on the stack. Personnel will be authorized by RMS.
  - 3.6. The duties of the foreperson will be established and communicated to all participants. The duties of the foreperson include, but are not limited to: overseeing worksite, scheduling pickups and deliveries, monitoring construction site safety and serving as the OFFICIAL Plowboy representative to the university.
  - 3.7. Everyone working on the bonfire is required to wear long pants, gloves, closed-toe shoes, a hard hat, and safety glasses.
  - 3.8. Alcohol is not allowed on the premises. Intoxicated/impaired individuals are not allowed on site.
  - 3.9. Only approved visitors allowed on site. All visitors, including alumni, must adhere to established guidelines. The Plowboys will notify the UPD as needed to assist with unauthorized visitors.
  - 3.10. The gates entering the bonfire area will remain closed at all times.
  - 3.11. A command area will be established the day the construction is set to begin. The area will house a first aid kit, fire extinguishers, extra hard hats, a list of emergency contacts, accountability board, and sign-in sheets. This designated area will be clearly marked and recognizable to participants. The safety area will remain in place until the final day of bonfire. The construction foreperson or authorized designee will manage the command area when scheduled site activities occur.
  - 3.12. Once the command post is established, an accountability board will be activated. Authorized participants are required to check in and out using the accountability board, using name/picture badges.

- 3.13. Everyone who enters the bonfire construction site must sign-in at the command post. The construction foreperson or designee will verify the participant's liability waiver and emergency information. An accurate list of workers must be on hand at all times.
- 3.14. A member of the Plowboys will be on-site 24 hours a day after the center pole is set.
- 3.15. On-site security will be provided by the university beginning on Tuesday of the week of the bonfire. On-site security will be on site from 10:00 PM- to 4:00 AM each day (College Farm location only).
- 3.16. When a participant leaves the bonfire site, he/she must sign out at the command post before departing, unless going on a bonfire related errand.
- 3.17. Typically, site work will not be allowed after midnight. Extenuating circumstances will require a written request for approval from the VPSL at the College Farm location only. No building will be allowed after midnight at the City Park location.
- 3.18. In case of an emergency, 911 will be called, followed immediately by a call to the University Control Center 254-968-9265.

#### 4. EXPECTATIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

##### 4.1. Plowboys

- 4.1.1. The Plowboys will assume responsibility for every aspect of the bonfire from pre-construction through the end of the event as outlined in this document.
- 4.1.2. The Plowboys will enforce the rules set forth by this document. This includes enforcement on Plowboy members, recruits and authorized personnel as well as unauthorized visitors.
- 4.1.3. The Plowboys will enlist the help of university officials, RMS, UPD, and on-site security as needed to ensure a safe environment for those constructing the bonfire and for those attending the event.
- 4.1.4. The Plowboys will place the highest priority on class attendance and academic performance during bonfire activities. This includes ensuring that members attend class and labs, study, and complete assignments.
- 4.1.5. The Plowboys will encourage all members participating in bonfire activities to get adequate rest during bonfire activities to assist in maintaining high academic performance and safety standards.
- 4.1.6. The Plowboys will not harass/haze anyone during bonfire activities or allow anyone else to do so.

4.1.7. Failure to comply with guidelines set forth in this document could result in immediate shut down of all bonfire activities and dismissal of Plowboy members, recruits and authorized personnel from the site. Further disciplinary action may be taken on an individual basis.

#### 4.2. University Responsibilities

4.2.1. The university will assume responsibility for enforcing policies/procedures to ensure bonfire activities are safe for those individuals involved in the construction and for those individuals attending the event.

4.2.2. The university will provide support and guidance to the Plowboys throughout all bonfire activities.

4.2.3. The university will monitor weather/environmental conditions and take appropriate actions if bonfire activities are in danger of bringing harm to individuals and/or property. The university Control Center will notify the Plowboy advisor in the event the Thorguard Lighting Prediction System activates in Red Alert.

### 5. SUPPLIES

5.1. Supplies needed for the bonfire include:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Provided by</u>
• Pallets	Pallet Donor List
• First Aid Kit	RMS
• Fire Extinguishers	RMS
• Hard Hats/Gloves	Tarleton Alumni Association/RMS
• Safety Glasses	RMS
• Liability Waivers	Student Activities/RMS
• Accountability Board	RMS
• Emergency University contacts	VPSL

#### Items to be purchased

- Spray Paint
- Gloves
- Hard Hats
- Plywood

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## Definitions

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**Accountability Board:** Display that communicates which authorized personnel are on site and which jobs are being performed. The accountability board is located inside the command post.

**Authorized Personnel:** Individuals who have completed safety training with RMS and who have permission to be within the construction site and working on building activities.

**Bonfire Site:**

Site 1 – College Farm (Site Map Included)

Site 2 – City of Stephenville Park

**Command Post:** Structure constructed first day on site that will serve as headquarters for all bonfire activities. The command post will house the accountability board and may serve as the bonfire topper.

**Construction Site:** Area within a designated diameter of the outer row of pallets (due to trailer turning ability).

**Dig Tess:** Process to locate buried facilities, required by the State of Texas, before digging.

**Foreperson:** Individual designated by the Plowboys and approved by Plowboy advisors to be in charge of all bonfire activities.

**Topper:** Ornament constructed by the Plowboys to be placed on the top of the bonfire at the end of construction. The topper may not exceed 8 feet in height.

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## Appendix

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College Farm Site Map

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## Contact Office

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Office of Student Life  
254.968.9081



APPENDIX

