

March 2, 2018

Dear Resident,

The City of Cottage Grove intends to burn prairie sites at Oakwood, Hardwood and Hamlet Parks this spring. Once established, prairies are relatively carefree. Prairies are primarily managed through periodic prescribed burns to remove undesirable woody and weed species, provide rich nutrients to the soil, enhance native habitat and boost the ecological environment for plants, animals and birds.

The prescribed burn will be performed by the company of Minnesota Native Landscapes and/or Stantec. They are both professional native landscape management companies and have performed many burns throughout the Midwest for many years. All applicable licensing and permits are applied for by the contractor and authorized by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The city understands that fires of any type can be scary for homeowners. However, prescribed burns are a common method of management throughout municipal, county, state and federal park systems. The safety precautions taken are time tested and minimize any risk to the adjacent neighborhoods. Such things as choosing ideal weather conditions, establishing burn breaks, keeping thousands of gallons of water at the site and having professionals of the industry perform the work make this method of management the most efficient and effective for the city.

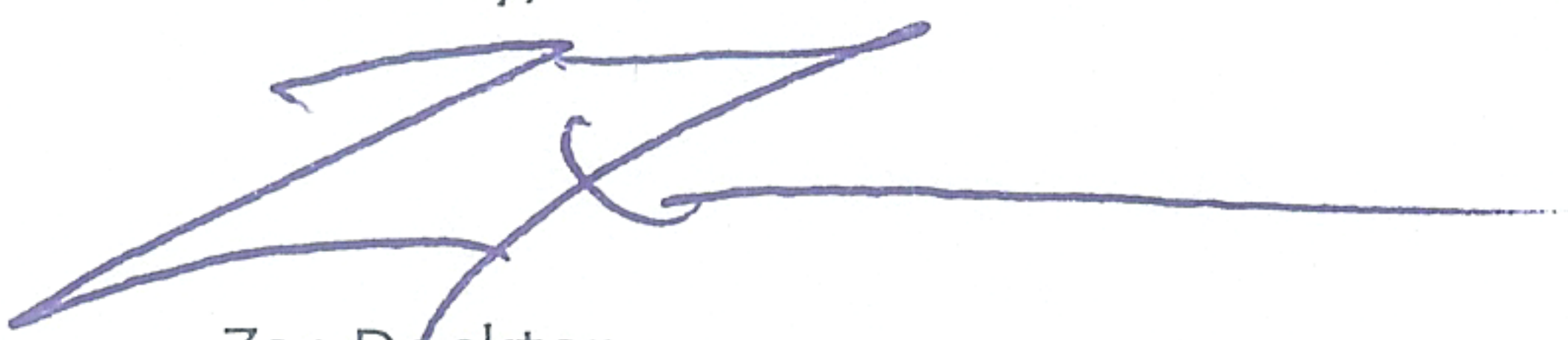
The type of fire used is quite often not what people may envision. The fire is kept very low to the ground and rarely rises above 18 inches in height. The fire crew works in stages and does not move more than 10 feet ahead without assuring the fire is completely extinguished behind them. The crew works very fast and most sites in Cottage Grove will be completed in two to six hours. If you wish to further educate yourself on the type of work being performed you can find some good generalized information on prescribed burns on the MN DNR website at the following address:

http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/backyard/privatelandsprogram/benefits_prescribed_burning.pdf

The end result is a durable and complex grassland that displays beautiful color throughout the seasons, adds character to the landscape, protects against soil erosion, improves water quality and enhances ecological habitat.

If you have any questions or concerns with this work, please contact me directly at 651-458-2808 or by email at zdockter@cottage-grove.org.

Sincerely,



Zac Dockter
Parks and Recreation Director

Hardwood Park Burn Area

