

PRESS RELEASE



Notice of Park Property Prescribed Burns

For Immediate Release:

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DES MOINES, IOWA – Thursday, January 03, 2019 – Des Moines Parks and Recreation have identified the following locations for possible prescribed burns Jan. 4 – Jan. 31:

- James W. Cownie Baseball Park – 2006 SE 22nd Street
- James W. Cownie Soccer Park – 2600 Hartford Avenue
- Elm Grove Cemetery – 6501 Indianola Avenue
- Ewing Park – 5300 Indianola Road
- Fourmile Creek Open Space – E 35th Street and E Sheridan Avenue
- Glendale Cemetery – 4909 University Avenue
- Greenwood Park – 4500 Grand Avenue
- Gray's Lake Park – 2101 Fleur Drive
- Greater Des Moines Softball Complex – 4980 Northeast 46th Street
- Meredith Trail Prairie Remnant – 1100 Thomas Beck Road
- McHenry Park – 1012 Oak Park Avenue
- Laurel Hill Cemetery – 3601 East Court Avenue
- Pioneer Park – 1602 Pioneer Road
- Witmer Park – 1610 34th Street
- Walnut Creek Trail – 1976 Center Street

Daily burn locations will be determined based on weather and wind conditions. We will also be posting notifications of our burns on Facebook (facebook.com/desmoinesparks) and Twitter (@desmoinesparks). [View maps](#) of these properties, as well as other locations that will undergo future burns.

What is a prescribed burn?

Prescribed burning is a controlled application of fire used as a natural management tool in the parks. Weather conditions such as precipitation and wind direction will determine which day and which location the burns will take place. Maps are available [online](#) of the park areas scheduled to be burned for the 2018-2019 season. Parks and Recreation staff asks the public to stay away from the parks during the burns. Staff would also like to assure the public that there is no reason to be alarmed when they see or smell smoke in the park burn area.

Why do a prescribed burn?

In nature, fire is essential to maintain the integrity of the native prairie and woodland plant species located in our parks. Fire is a natural occurrence that helps the plant and animal communities in a park and controlled burning offers a safer way to use fire in a helpful manner. The benefits of prescribed burns include:

- Aid in reducing the undesirable plants from invading our prairie and woodlands

- Help maintain a rich diversity of wildflowers and grasses
- Encourage oak and other native trees to naturally regenerate in our woodlands
- Decrease threat of a wildfire by decreasing the accumulation of combustibles
- Benefit water quality by aiding in the establishment of deep-rooted natives
- Improve the natural beauty and enjoyment of our parks

Who conducts the burn?

Experienced park staff conducts the prescribed burns. The parks burn crew has been certified in accordance with a nationally standardized testing program for professionals participating in woodland burns. Park staff members have studied fire behavior and fire control techniques to ensure the safety of the burn crew, residents and private property.

About Des Moines Parks and Recreation

Founded in 1892, the Parks and Recreation Department's mission is "Helping Des Moines Live Well, Play Hard and Protect the Earth." Our department is responsible for the management of 75 parks, over 4,000 acres of parkland, 81 miles of trails, seven cemeteries and numerous municipal facilities. In addition, we offer numerous programs in the areas of sports, urban conservation, environment education, sport instruction, volunteerism, rentals and special events. For more information on Des Moines Parks and Recreation programs or facilities, visit our website (www.dmparks.org), Facebook (facebook.com/desmoinesparks), Twitter ([@desmoinesparks](https://twitter.com/desmoinesparks)) and Instagram (instagram.com/desmoinesparks)

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