
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Annual Controlled Burns in Beloit Parks

March 20, 2018 – Beloit, WI: The City of Beloit Parks & Recreation Division will conduct their annual Controlled Burn program in designated park sites during a four (4) week period of March 21, 2018, through April 20, 2018, depending upon weather conditions.

Historically, natural wildfires played a very important role in shaping the natural prairie grassland that once covered over two million acres of Wisconsin. Today, less than 12,000 scattered acres still exist, and the use of Controlled Burning Programs helps protect and maintain these natural prairie grassland areas.

The purpose of controlled burns is multi-faceted and provides the following benefits:

- Reduces the amount of dead and dying plant material that hinders new plant growth in the spring.
- Recycles nutrients from old plant growth for use by growing plants.
- Promotes germination, growth, and flowering of native plants.
- Increases the diversity of native plant life.
- Controls encroachment of woody brush and trees into grasslands, including invasive species such as garlic mustard.

Controlled Burn areas are generally conducted in the spring after snow melt and/or in the fall after leaf fall has concluded. These designated sites are typically burned on a 2-5 year interval, and in some cases annually to prevent overgrowth of a defined area.

This year, the Parks & Recreation Division will only conduct controlled burns in the following designated locations:

- Harper's Prairie (aka West Side Detention Pond), located at 2201 Whipple Street.
- Stateline Restoration Prairie, located at 540 Colby Street.
- Big Hill Park, located at 1101 Big Hill Road.
- Various areas at the Krueger Haskell Golf Course
- Various areas in Riverside Park, located at 1160 Riverside Drive
- NE corner of Riverside Drive & Eclipse Drive near the Beloit Library
- Water Tower Park, located at 1002 White Avenue

Consistent with practices as developed and conducted by the Wisconsin DNR and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, each park site is appropriately supervised and monitored by trained staff or volunteers from the City's Parks & Recreation Division. These controlled burns will only be conducted under the appropriate weather conditions, as safety is the top concern in implementation of this practiced program. If weather conditions are not appropriate for these controlled burns, they will be postponed until a later date when the weather conditions are considered acceptable for this practice.

Additional information regarding these controlled burns may be obtained by calling the Golf Course Maintenance Office at (608) 364-2869.

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