

Fall 2009 *OK-FIRE* Training Sessions Announced



OK-FIRE is a **weather-based decision-support system for wildland fire managers in Oklahoma**. Applications include both wildfire and prescribed fire. The program has been developed over the past four years by Oklahoma State University in conjunction with the University of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Mesonet, the state's automated weather station network.

OK-FIRE has a three-fold focus: (1) an extensive suite of recent, current, and forecast products for fire weather, fire danger, and smoke dispersion; (2) a dedicated web site (<http://okfire.mesonet.org>) **; and (3) regional training and customer support. The 120-station Oklahoma Mesonet is used for current and recent conditions, while an 84-hour forecast model (NAM) of the National Weather Service is used for forecast conditions. Products are available in map, graph, and table format.

OK-FIRE training opportunities during Fall 2009 are listed below. EVE denotes a 2-hour evening session (7 - 9 pm); AM, a morning half-day computer workshop (8:30 am – 12 noon); and AFT, an afternoon half-day computer workshop (1:30 – 5 pm). All training sessions will be directed by Dr. J. D. Carlson, OSU fire meteorologist and director of the OK-FIRE program. As you can see below, training will be available for most geographical areas of Oklahoma.

LOCATION	DATES	AVAILABLE SESSIONS
ENID	Sep. 23-24	EVE (Sep. 23); AM (Sep. 24); AFT (Sep. 24)
EL RENO	Oct. 1-2	EVE (Oct. 1); AM (Oct. 2); AFT (Oct. 2)
BURNS FLAT	Oct. 27-28	EVE (Oct. 27); AM (Oct. 28)
WEATHERFORD	Oct. 28-29	EVE (Oct. 28); AM (Oct. 29); AFT (Oct. 29)
WOODWARD	Nov. 3-4	EVE (Nov. 3); AM (Nov. 4); AFT (Nov. 4)
GOODWELL	Nov. 5-6	EVE (Nov. 5); AM (Nov. 6); AFT (Nov. 6)
MUSKOGEE	Nov. 10-11	EVE (Nov. 10); AM (Nov. 11)
BARTLESVILLE	Nov. 11-12	EVE (Nov. 11); AM (Nov. 12); AFT (Nov. 12)
TALIHINA	Nov. 17-18	EVE (Nov. 17); AM (Nov. 18); AFT (Nov. 18)
MCALESTER	Nov. 19-20	EVE (Nov. 19); AM (Nov. 20); AFT (Nov. 20)
ALTUS	Nov. 23-24	EVE (Nov. 23); AM (Nov. 24); AFT (Nov. 24)
SHAWNEE	Dec. 1-2	EVE (Dec. 1); AM (Dec. 2)
ADA	Dec. 2-3	EVE (Dec. 2); AM (Dec. 3); AFT (Dec. 3)
DUNCAN	Dec. 9-10	EVE (Dec. 9); AM (Dec. 10)
ARDMORE	Dec. 10-11	EVE (Dec. 10); AM (Dec. 11); AFT (Dec. 11)
STILLWATER	Dec. 15-16	EVE (Dec. 15); AM (Dec. 16); AFT (Dec. 16)

With respect to **wildfire**, benefits of using OK-FIRE include *better anticipation of severe wildfire conditions, the ability to determine optimal staffing levels, and tracking existing and forecast weather conditions during the wildfire itself, leading to better suppression strategies*. In addition, OK-FIRE can provide *guidance to counties in their **burn ban decisions***. With respect to **prescribed fire**, OK-FIRE can help in the *planning and conducting of prescribed burns*.

With respect to training, this fall we are specifically inviting *emergency managers, county commissioners, fire departments, and extension agricultural educators* across the state, although anyone is welcome. Two formats will be offered this year: (1) **half-day computer workshops** held during the daytime in which the attendee will have a hands-on computer experience with the OK-FIRE web site, and (2) an abbreviated **2-hour evening training session** (7-9 pm) for those who can't make a daytime workshop (such as those in a rural fire department). Here the format will consist of an overview of the products as well as a live demonstration of the OK-FIRE web site.

These training sessions serve as an introduction to OK-FIRE and are intended only for those who have NOT attended a previous workshop in past years. The daytime workshops will occur in a computer lab and last a half-day: a MORNING session from 8:30 am to 12 noon, and, in most locations, an AFTERNOON session from 1:30 to 5 pm. Since computer lab space is limited (typically 15-20 computers per lab), only one or two key people ideally from a given agency location, county organization, or fire department location should be identified to attend these daytime sessions, so as to accommodate as many persons around the geographical region as possible. The evening sessions will be held in larger rooms, accommodating 40 people or more. All sessions will be located at regional technology centers or universities.

To register, contact Melissa Moore (melissa.s.moore@okstate.edu, 405-744-5431). In your response, please specify the location/date of the training in which you're interested and whether you prefer an evening session or a half-day workshop (you can only register for one). Also please include YOUR contact information, including name, agency or fire department (if any), phone number, and e-mail address. If you prefer a half-day workshop (where space is limited), please indicate whether you prefer a MORNING or AFTERNOON session (list your first/second choices). Depending on the numbers responding, there will be some degree of shifting for the daytime workshops and not everyone will get their first choice since space is limited. The computer workshops will be filled on a **first register, first serve** basis. There is no cost for the evening session or half-day workshop, outside of travel costs to the technology center or university hosting the training session. More information about the training (including directions) and your assigned session will be sent out about a week before the session date.

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** The OK-FIRE web site address is <http://okfire.mesonet.org> , if you'd like to check it out before deciding whether to attend a training session. Make sure you first download the "WeatherScope" software onto your computer from the home page. Choose the version for your operating system (Macintosh or Windows). For more information, consult the document in the "Product Information" section on the home page entitled "Initial Tasks to Perform Before Using OK-FIRE".