



**OCCA PRESCRIBED BURN ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE & OPERATIONS MANUAL**

2026



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PART I

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & SCOPE

ARTICLE 1

AUTHORITY & RELATIONSHIP TO OCCA

1.1 Establishment

The Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association Prescribed Burn Association (OCCA–PBA) is established as a standing committee of the Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association (OCCA).

The PBA is **not** a separate legal entity and operates **under the authority and oversight of the OCCA Board.**

1.2 Scope of Authority

The PBA Committee is authorized to:

- Coordinate prescribed burn education and training
- Facilitate shared equipment use
- Establish operational standards for participation
- Maintain records related to PBA activities
- Collect dues and fees as approved

All committee actions remain subject to OCCA oversight.

1.3 Asset Ownership

All equipment, funds, and property acquired for the PBA remain **assets of the Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association** unless otherwise designated by board action.



ARTICLE 2

MISSION & PURPOSE

The purpose of the OCCA–PBA Committee is to:

1. Promote safe, responsible, and lawful prescribed burning.
2. Improve forage production and wildlife habitat.
3. Reduce catastrophic wildfire risk in Okmulgee County.
4. Provide tools, training, education, and resources for members to conduct prescribed burns safely.

The PBA supports landowners but does not assume operational control of individual burns. **The landowner/Burn Boss retains full legal and operational responsibility.**

ARTICLE 3

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE & LEADERSHIP

The Prescribed Burn Association operates through a Steering Committee responsible for coordination of training, equipment, member participation, and operational planning.

The Steering Committee functions under the authority of the Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association (OCCA) Board of Directors.

3.1 PBA Chairman

The PBA Chairman:

- Serves as liaison to the OCCA Board of Directors
- Provides updates to the Board regarding operations, finances, and equipment status



- Leads PBA meetings
 - Oversees implementation of this Manual
 - Coordinates with state-level prescribed burn organizations when appropriate
 - Ensures the Committee operates in alignment with OCCA policies
-

3.2 Secretary/Treasurer

The Secretary/Treasurer:

- Maintains the official membership roster
- Maintains the Active Burn-Eligible Member list
- Maintains the “Burn List” (properties prepared and ready for fire)
- Collects and records membership dues and equipment fees
- Maintains training documentation and required records
- Maintains financial summaries for Committee and Board review

All records shall be maintained in accordance with OCCA financial and recordkeeping policies.

3.3 Safety & Training Coordinator

The Safety & Training Coordinator:

- Coordinates prescribed fire workshops and training opportunities
 - Works with OSU Extension and/or local Fire Departments when appropriate
 - Verifies completion of required training
 - Ensures safety standards are reinforced and documented
 - Recommends improvements to training protocols as needed
-

3.4 Equipment & Logistics Quartermaster



The Equipment & Logistics Quartermaster:

- Maintains inventory of all PBA equipment
- Oversees equipment checkout and return procedures
- Manages equipment scheduling during burn windows
- Ensures equipment is maintained in safe working order
- Reports maintenance needs to the Committee

The Quartermaster may recommend suspension of equipment use if safety concerns arise.

ARTICLE 4

MEETINGS & REPORTING

4.1 Committee Meetings

The PBA Committee shall meet at intervals determined by operational needs, including:

- Pre-season planning meetings
- Training coordination meetings
- Equipment inspection meetings
- Post-season review meetings

4.2 Member Meetings

The Committee may call general PBA member meetings as needed for:

- Orientation
- Training
- Policy updates
- Planning for burn season

4.3 Reporting to OCCA Board



The Committee Chair shall provide periodic updates to the OCCA Board, including:

- Membership numbers
- Financial summaries
- Equipment status
- Incidents or safety concerns
- Policy recommendations

Major expenditures, asset purchases, or structural changes shall require Board approval as defined by OCCA procedures.

ARTICLE 5

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

5.1 Membership Dues

Participation in the PBA requires:

- Active membership in the Okmulgee County Cattlemen's Association
- **Payment of an annual PBA membership fee of \$25**

5.2 Use of Funds

Funds collected by the PBA may be used to support the mission and operations of the committee, including:

- Equipment maintenance and repair
- Equipment replacement or upgrades
- Training programs
- Safety supplies
- Administrative expenses
- Educational or outreach events

With approval of the OCCA Board, funds may also be allocated toward broader association initiatives consistent with OCCA's mission.



No funds shall be distributed for personal benefit.

5.3 Equipment Deposits & Fees

The Committee may establish:

- A refundable equipment deposit
- A per-burn equipment usage fee

Amounts shall be determined by the Committee and approved in accordance with OCCA financial procedures.

5.4 Financial Oversight

All PBA funds shall be handled in accordance with OCCA financial policies.

The Treasurer shall maintain accurate records of:

- Dues collected
- Deposits collected and returned
- Equipment fees
- Maintenance expenses
- Event revenues and reimbursements



PART II

MEMBERSHIP & ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

ARTICLE 6

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Participation in the OCCA Prescribed Burn Association (OCCA–PBA) is limited to **members in good standing** of the Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association (OCCA).

For operational purposes, PBA members shall fall into one of two categories:

6.1 Supporting Member

A Supporting Member:

- Pays annual PBA dues
- May attend meetings and workshops
- May volunteer on burns under supervision
- May not check out PBA equipment
- May not request burn assistance for their own property

Supporting Members are encouraged to participate in training and educational activities as they work toward Active Burn-Eligible status.

6.2 Active Burn-Eligible Member

An Active Burn-Eligible Member:

- Meets all training and documentation requirements
- May request equipment checkout
- May request burn support to burn own property
- May serve in burn leadership roles when appropriate



Active status is not automatic and must be formally approved and recorded.

ARTICLE 7

TRAINING VERIFICATION & ACTIVE STATUS APPROVAL

The PBA operates as a cooperative organization. Eligibility to conduct burns using PBA equipment requires documented training, participation, and approval.

Active Burn-Eligible status is granted only after required documentation has been reviewed and approved.

7.1 Required Training Components

Each member seeking Active Burn-Eligible status must complete the following:

1. Completion of the OSU Extension Online Training Course: Introduction to Prescribed Fire (or other Committee-approved equivalent).
2. Attendance at least one PBA-endorsed prescribed burn workshop.
3. Participation in a minimum of two (2) scheduled PBA burns assisting other members prior to requesting a burn on their own property.

Supervised participation provides experience in:

- Fire behavior observation
- Ignition techniques
- Holding line procedures
- Equipment operation
- Weather monitoring
- Crew coordination
- Safety protocol enforcement



The Committee may require additional supervised participation if deemed necessary for safety.

7.2 Cooperative Participation Requirement (“Gives Get” Rule)

The PBA operates on a cooperative labor exchange model.

To request a burn on their own property, a member must:

- Assist on at least two (2) scheduled PBA burns for other members prior to requesting their own burn.
- Be present and actively participating during the burn conducted on their own property.

The PBA is a cooperative, not a service provider.

7.3 Submission of Training Documentation

Upon completion of required training, the member must submit the following to the Secretary/Treasurer:

- Certificate or confirmation of online training completion
- Verification of workshop attendance
- Completed Training Log documenting supervised burn participation
- Current insurance declaration page
- Signed required agreements

Documentation must be submitted prior to requesting equipment.

Incomplete documentation will not activate eligibility.

7.4 Approval of Active Status

Active Burn-Eligible status shall be granted only after:

- All required documentation is received
- Documentation is reviewed for completeness



- The member is confirmed to be in good standing

The Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain an official roster identifying:

- Supporting Members
- Active Burn-Eligible Members

Only members listed on the Active roster may check out equipment.

7.5 Maintenance of Active Status

To remain Active Burn-Eligible, a member must:

- Maintain current OCCA membership
- Maintain current PBA dues
- Maintain current insurance documentation
- Remain in compliance with all safety and operational standards

Failure to maintain documentation may result in suspension of equipment privileges until compliance is restored.

ARTICLE 8

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Active members are responsible for:

- Ensuring all documentation remains current
- Notifying the Secretary of changes in insurance status
- Returning equipment in proper condition
- Submitting required burn documentation

Members are strongly encouraged to maintain a personal field binder containing:

- Copy of insurance declaration page
- Copy of training certificate(s)



- Completed Burn Plans
- Notification documentation
- Weather logs
- Volunteer waivers
- Post-Burn Reports

This binder should accompany the Burn Boss during all burn operations.



PART III

FIELD OPERATIONS & BURN STANDARDS

ARTICLE 9

GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Prescribed burns conducted under the OCCA–PBA shall adhere to the following principles:

- Safety is mandatory and non-negotiable.
 - The Landowner/Burn Boss retains full legal authority and responsibility.
 - No burn shall occur without a completed Burn Plan.
 - No PBA equipment shall be used without approved documentation on file.
 - All operations must comply with Oklahoma statutes and local regulations.
-

ARTICLE 10

BEFORE THE BURN

10.1 Burn Plan Requirement

No burn may be conducted using PBA equipment or assistance without a written Burn Plan.

The Burn Plan must include:

- Legal description and/or physical address
- Acreage
- Fuel type and condition
- Topography considerations
- Clearly stated burn objectives
- Weather prescription parameters



- Firebreak preparation details
- Ignition strategy
- Contingency plan
- Smoke management considerations

A sample Burn Plan form shall be included in Part V of this Manual.

10.2 Burn Plan Submission Procedure

The Burn Plan must be:

- Submitted to the Committee (Secretary or designated officer) prior to equipment release
- Reviewed for completeness (advisory review only)
- Signed by the Landowner/Burn Boss

Approval of completeness does not transfer liability.

10.3 Required Notifications

Prior to ignition, the Burn Boss shall:

- Notify adjoining landowners
- Notify the local Fire Department (minimum 48 hours recommended)
- Notify Sheriff or appropriate authority if smoke may impact roadways
- Notify Forestry Division if required

Documentation of notification shall be retained.

10.4 Equipment Checkout Requirements

Before equipment is released:

- Member must be listed as Active Burn-Eligible
- Required forms must be on file



- Equipment Checkout Agreement must be signed
- Refundable deposit (amount to be determined) must be paid

Deposit shall be returned upon verified proper return of equipment.

ARTICLE 11

DAY OF BURN OPERATIONS

11.1 Pre-Burn Safety Briefing

Before ignition:

- Conduct tailgate safety meeting
- Review burn objectives
- Review weather conditions
- Confirm communication plan
- Assign crew roles
- Identify escape routes
- Confirm water availability

Attendance shall be documented.

11.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All participants must wear:

- Leather boots
 - Leather gloves
 - All-cotton or flame-resistant clothing
 - Eye protection (recommended)
 - No synthetic clothing permitted
-



11.3 Weather Monitoring

During burn operations:

- Weather conditions must remain within prescription
- Weather shall be monitored periodically
- Ignition shall cease if conditions move outside prescription

Weather observations shall be logged.

ARTICLE 11A

BURN DAY CHAIN OF COMMAND

On the day of the burn, a clear chain of command is required to prevent confusion and ensure safety.

The Fire Boss

The Fire Boss is the designated operational leader for the specific burn unit.

The Fire Boss:

- Has final “Go/No-Go” authority
- Determines whether weather conditions meet prescription
- Directs ignition sequence and crew positioning
- May halt ignition or operations at any time

If the Fire Boss determines conditions are unsafe, ignition shall not proceed.

Ignition Crew

The Ignition Crew:

- Follows the firing sequence as directed by the Fire Boss
- Maintains spacing and pace consistent with burn objectives



- Does not deviate from instructions without approval
-

Holding Crew

The Holding Crew:

- Patrols firebreaks and containment lines
 - Suppresses spot fires immediately
 - Monitors smoke movement and ember transport
-

The Landowner

The Landowner:

- Provides local knowledge (fence lines, hazards, water sources, terrain considerations)
- Participates in burn operations
- Defers tactical fire behavior decisions to the Fire Boss

Operational decisions on burn day are directed by the Fire Boss to ensure safety and coordination.

ARTICLE 12

AFTER THE BURN

12.1 Mop-Up & Patrol

The Burn Boss is responsible for:

- Securing all perimeter lines
 - Monitoring for re-ignition risk
 - Ensuring fire is fully contained
-

12.2 Post-Burn Documentation



Within 7 days, the Burn Boss shall submit:

- Acres burned
- Weather summary
- Equipment used
- Incident summary (if any)
- Volunteer list
- Lessons learned

These reports shall be retained in Committee records.

12.3 Equipment Return Standards

Upon return:

- Equipment shall be cleaned
- Fuel tanks topped off
- Inventory verified
- Damage reported immediately

Failure to return equipment properly may result in forfeiture of deposit and suspension of privileges.



PART IV

EQUIPMENT GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL CONTROLS

ARTICLE 13

EQUIPMENT OWNERSHIP & OVERSIGHT

13.1 Ownership

All equipment acquired for use by the OCCA–PBA shall remain the property of the Okmulgee County Cattlemen’s Association unless otherwise designated by formal Board action.

Equipment may include, but is not limited to:

- Burn trailers
- Water tanks
- Pumps and hoses
- Drip torches
- Radios
- Hand tools
- Personal protective equipment
- Utility trailers
- Other fire-related assets

13.2 Equipment Oversight

The Equipment Coordinator shall:

- Maintain an up-to-date inventory list
- Maintain inspection and maintenance logs
- Coordinate routine service and repair
- Report equipment status to the Committee



- Recommend replacement or upgrade when needed

The Committee retains authority to suspend use of equipment deemed unsafe.

ARTICLE 14

EQUIPMENT ELIGIBILITY & RELEASE

14.1 Eligibility for Checkout

Equipment may only be checked out by members who:

- Are listed on the Active Burn-Eligible roster
- Have current insurance documentation on file
- Have completed required training
- Have submitted a completed Burn Plan
- Have signed the Equipment Checkout Agreement

No exceptions shall be made without Committee approval.

14.2 Equipment Deposit Requirement

A refundable equipment deposit shall be required prior to equipment release.

Deposit amount: \$_____ (to be determined by Committee and Board)

Purpose of deposit:

- Encourage timely return
- Cover minor damage
- Provide assurance against loss

Deposit shall be returned upon:

- Timely return of equipment
- Verification of inventory



- Confirmation of no damage beyond normal wear

The Committee reserves the right to withhold part or all of the deposit if:

- Equipment is damaged
 - Equipment is lost
 - Equipment is returned excessively dirty
 - Fuel is not replenished
-

14.3 Usage Fees (If Applicable)

The Committee may establish:

- A per-burn equipment usage fee
- Fuel reimbursement policies
- Event-based fees

Any fees shall be approved consistent with OCCA financial procedures.

ARTICLE 15

EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

15.1 User Responsibility

The member checking out equipment is responsible for:

- Safe transportation
- Safe operation
- Secure storage during possession
- Preventing unauthorized use
- Returning equipment on time

Equipment may not be loaned to non-members.

15.2 Damage or Loss



The user shall immediately report:

- Equipment malfunction
- Damage
- Theft
- Loss

Replacement or repair costs may be assessed based on:

- Extent of damage
- Determination by Committee
- Cost of parts and labor

Intentional misuse may result in suspension of privileges.

15.3 Return Standards

Upon return:

- Equipment shall be cleaned
- Tanks refilled (if applicable)
- Inventory verified
- Maintenance concerns reported
- Post-Burn Report submitted

Return condition shall be documented by the Equipment Coordinator or designated officer.

ARTICLE 16

FINANCIAL CONTROLS & FUND MANAGEMENT

16.1 Collection of Funds

Funds collected by the PBA may include:

- Annual dues



- Equipment deposits
- Equipment usage fees
- Event revenue
- Sponsorships or donations

All funds shall be handled in accordance with OCCA financial policies.

16.2 Use of Funds

Funds collected by the PBA may be used to support:

- Equipment maintenance and repair
- Equipment replacement
- Training programs
- Safety supplies
- Administrative expenses
- Educational programming
- Other purposes approved by the OCCA Board

The Committee recognizes that use of funds remains subject to OCCA oversight and broader association needs.

16.3 Event Revenue & Reimbursement

If OCCA provides financial support for a PBA event, the Committee acknowledges:

- Event expenses shall be accounted for
- OCCA shall be reimbursed for documented expenditures as agreed
- Remaining proceeds shall remain within the PBA fund unless otherwise directed

Specific arrangements shall be approved by the OCCA Board.



16.4 Financial Reporting

The Treasurer shall:

- Maintain accurate financial records
- Provide financial summaries upon request
- Present an annual summary to the Committee and Board

Transparency is required at all times.

ARTICLE 17

DISCIPLINARY ACTION RELATED TO EQUIPMENT & FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Committee may impose disciplinary action for:

- Failure to return equipment
- Repeated damage
- Misuse of funds
- Failure to pay dues or fees
- Failure to maintain documentation

Actions may include:

- Written warning
- Suspension of equipment privileges
- Forfeiture of deposit
- Removal of Active Burn-Eligible status

Serious matters may be referred to the OCCA Board.



PART V

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION & MEMBER RECORDS

ARTICLE 18

REQUIRED PRE-BURN DOCUMENTATION

Prior to any burn conducted under the OCCA–PBA name or utilizing OCCA–PBA equipment, the following documentation must be completed and submitted, as applicable:

1. Burn Request Form
2. Written Prescribed Burn Plan
3. Burn Notification Plan (in compliance with Oklahoma statute)
4. Equipment Checkout Agreement (if equipment is utilized)
5. Signed Liability Waiver or Volunteer Release of Liability (as applicable)
6. Verification of active membership and training status

No burn assistance or equipment shall be authorized without required documentation on file.

ARTICLE 19

REQUIRED DAY-OF-BURN DOCUMENTATION

During burn operations, the following documentation must be maintained by the Burn Boss:

1. Prescribed Burn: Hourly Weather Log
2. A copy of the approved Burn Plan
3. A copy of the Burn Notification Plan



These documents should remain accessible during operations and retained as part of the burn record.

ARTICLE 20

REQUIRED POST-BURN DOCUMENTATION

Following completion of a burn, the following documentation must be submitted:

1. Post Burn Form
2. Equipment Checkout documentation (confirming return condition, if applicable)

Submission timeline: _____ days following completion (to be finalized by Committee).

Failure to submit required documentation may affect future eligibility for equipment use or burn assistance.

ARTICLE 21

RECORD RETENTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The OCCA–PBA Committee shall maintain official copies of:

- Burn Request Forms
- Approved Burn Plans
- Burn Notification documentation
- Liability Waivers / Volunteer Releases
- Equipment Checkout Agreements
- Post Burn Forms
- Membership & Training Log records

Members are strongly encouraged to maintain a personal burn binder containing copies of:



- Submitted burn documentation
- Weather logs
- Training verification certificates
- Insurance verification documents

This manual is intended to serve as a reference guide and compliance resource for participating members.

ARTICLE 22

OFFICIAL FORMS ACCESS & VERSION CONTROL

Official OCCA–PBA forms are maintained by the Committee and made available electronically.

Only the most current approved versions of forms shall be used.

Blank forms are not included in this manual to allow for revision and updating without requiring full manual reissue.



PART VI

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES & TECHNICAL REFERENCES

ARTICLE 23

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The OCCA–PBA supports the responsible and science-based use of prescribed fire as a land management tool. Members are encouraged to pursue continued education and skill development to improve safety, effectiveness, and compliance.

Participation in training and educational events strengthens:

- Operational safety
- Legal compliance
- Fire behavior understanding
- Risk management
- Community confidence in prescribed burning

Education is not a substitute for personal responsibility but is considered a core component of responsible burn management.

ARTICLE 24

RECOMMENDED TRAINING RESOURCES

Members are encouraged to complete recognized training opportunities related to prescribed fire and fire management, including:

- Oklahoma State University Extension prescribed fire workshops
- OSU Extension online prescribed fire training modules (as available)
- Local or regional Prescribed Burn Association field days



- Oklahoma Cooperative Extension educational programs related to rangeland and fire

Completion of training should be documented and submitted in accordance with Part II of this manual.

ARTICLE 25

OKLAHOMA STATUTORY REFERENCES

Members are responsible for understanding and complying with applicable Oklahoma law governing prescribed burning.

Primary statutory reference:

- Oklahoma Statutes Title 2 § 16-28.2 (Prescribed Burning Act)

Members should remain informed of any updates or changes to state or local regulations.

This manual does not replace statutory requirements.

ARTICLE 26

TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS & EXTENSION MATERIALS

The following publications are recommended as technical guidance resources:

- Using Prescribed Fire in Oklahoma (OSU Extension E-927)
- Prescribed Burn Associations (OSU NREM-2880)
- Burn Plan Development for Prescribed Burning (OSU NREM-2893)
- Firebreak Construction for Prescribed Burning (OSU NREM-2890)
- Understanding Liability and Risk in Prescribed Fire (OSU NREM-2905)
- Fire Prescriptions for Native Plant Communities (OSU NREM-2878)



Members are encouraged to consult the Oklahoma State University Extension website for current publications and updates.

ARTICLE 27

WEATHER & FIRE INFORMATION RESOURCES

Reliable weather and fire condition information is essential to safe operations.

Members should reference:

- Oklahoma Mesonet
- National Weather Service Fire Weather Forecasts
- Oklahoma Forestry Services
- Local emergency management or fire departments

Real-time weather monitoring is required during burn operations as outlined in Part III of this manual.

ARTICLE 28

EXTERNAL AGENCY COORDINATION

Prescribed burning may involve coordination with:

- Local Fire Departments
- County Sheriff's Offices
- Oklahoma Forestry Services
- Adjacent landowners

Maintaining professional relationships with these entities strengthens community trust and operational success.



ARTICLE 29

MANUAL REVIEW & UPDATES

This manual may be reviewed and updated as needed to reflect:

- Changes in Oklahoma law
- Updated best management practices
- Lessons learned from operational experience
- Committee or Board direction

Educational resources listed herein may also be updated periodically to reflect current technical guidance.

