



Lindberg Park & Field Park Prescribed Burn Fact Sheet

An Initiative of the Park District of Oak Park's Greening Advisory Committee

Project Summary

In the late winter/early spring (March - April) The Park District of Oak Park will conduct a prescribed burn of the Lindberg Park prairie trial gardens and the Field Park natural area (in the southwest corner of the park) for the purpose of improving the health of the plantings and educating the community about the role fire plays in maintaining the health of native plant communities such as prairie, savanna, and woodland.

The prescribed burns will be conducted by certified staff and volunteers with the Oak Park Fire Department on site for the duration of the burn. The areas immediately surrounding the areas will be closed to the public, however the public is invited to observe from a safe distance. The Park District anticipates the closure from approximately 9 AM till 3 PM however, it will open immediately upon the cessation of each prescribed burn.

Conducting a prescribed burn is weather dependent and will only occur within the parameters for wind speed, wind direction, and relative humidity. Snow or ice cover and moisture level of the dead vegetation are also considered.

Required permits from the IL Environmental Protection Agency and Cook County Department of Environmental Control will be obtained. These permits require public notification. In addition, the Park District is hosting a community information meeting.

The introduction of prescribed fire is the first step in improving the health and beauty of these natural areas.

Fire & Native Plant Communities

All native plant communities of northeastern Illinois - wetland, woodland, savanna, and prairie - require regular fire to remain healthy. Historically these ecosystems burned due to anthropogenic (human caused) and natural (lightning) reasons. In the absence of fire, these communities lose their balance and become unhealthy. Coupled with the introduction of non-native plant species, native plant communities, along with the birds and butterflies that depend on them, are lost.

Many non-native species did not evolve with regular fire. As a result, prescribed fire is one tool for controlling the spread of them. After outright destruction to roads,

buildings, farms, etc. the invasion by non-native species is the greatest threat to native plant communities.

The Lindberg Prairie Trial Gardens constitute a prairie reconstruction and therefore requires occasional fire to succeed. Many non-native plant species are present. A prescribed burn was conducted at Lindberg Park in March 2010. The Field Park natural area will also benefit from a prescribed burn. It has never been burned.

How Do You Control a Burn?

The ground surrounding the trial gardens and the natural area is either inflammable sidewalk or green grass. Burn crew members will be stationed along a perimeter with water tanks and flappers in the event fire creeps outward from the burn unit.

For Further Information

On Thursday, March 10, 2011 a community information meeting is being held regarding the Lindberg Park and Field Park Prescribed Burns. Doug Chien, a member of the Park District Greening Advisory Committee who is certified as a Prescribed Burn Manager, will present information and answer questions. To review the 2010 presentation visit oakparkparks.com, select About Us, then select Green Initiatives.

Greening Advisory Committee

This project is an initiative of the Park District of Oak Park's Greening Advisory Committee. This committee is made up of citizen volunteers and Park District staff members who monitor and contribute to the Park District's environmental activities and oversee the implementation of the PDOP's Environmental Policy. For more information on this committee, contact Henrietta Yardley at (708) 725-2450 or henriettay@oakparkparks.com

Timeline

Secure Burn Permit	February 2011
Prescribed Burn	Sometime between mid-March and the end of April, depending on weather conditions