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FOR RELEASE: Monday, March 17, 2025

Update: Stillwater Wildfires – Assessment of Aftermath and Stillwater Strong Relief

(Stillwater, OK) – City of Stillwater remains alert to the potential for additional wildfires for the next couple of days while firefighters continue to extinguish hotspots, and work with administration, staff, and state and federal agencies to assess structural loss and damages.

“While we are still in the response phase with our first responders, the City is also focused on the recovery efforts to serve the families affected by Friday’s fires,” City Manager Brady Moore said. “I’m so appreciative of the countless volunteers, generous donations, and outpouring of support and unity from our community.”

Preliminary data reflects there are 74 homes/structure losses and 11 heavily damaged in the City of Stillwater response area, and 170 total structure losses in Payne County. Earlier today and throughout the week, Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, FEMA, and U.S. Small Business Administration are performing damage assessments as part of the recovery process.

Stillwater continues to face wildfire concerns as the area remains under a Red Flag Warning throughout Tuesday. Emergency alerts and notifications will continue to be shared online at stillwaterok.gov/wildfires, and on the Stillwater Emergency Management Facebook account at: <https://www.facebook.com/StwSema/>.

There are steps that may help protect residents from fires, provided by the National Fire Protection Association, to include: clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and pine needles that could catch embers; replace or repair any loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration; reduce embers that could pass through vents in the eaves by installing 1/8 inch metal mesh screening; repair or replace damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows, remove anything stored underneath decks or porches. For the full list and additional resources, go to nfpa.org.

There are many community relief efforts to collect donations of everyday living essentials and monetary gifts for those who lost their homes and were most impacted by the wildfires.

Stillwater Strong, Relief is an organized effort for residents who were most impacted by the wildfires to pick up essentials for personal and animal care, food and beverages, while also receiving assistance and guidance with City services and recovery efforts, and mental health support. This effort of support and unity is available for items to be picked up on Wednesday, March 19, 4-6 p.m. and Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Stillwater Armory, 315 E 9th Street. For questions, organize pick-up of items, and needing assistance in other areas, email: stillwaterstrongrelief@gmail.com.

Donations can be dropped off at the Armory, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., with items most needed are gift cards, lotion, Chapstick, peanut butter, jelly, plastic tubs, bath towels, shampoo/conditioner, paper products, bleach wipes, sparkling water, pasta and pasta sauce, macaroni and cheese, bread, eye drops, allergy medicine, body wash, soap, phone charging cords and blocks, wet wipes, and eyeglasses/readers.

To make monetary donations, go to: <https://www.unitedwaypaynecounty.org/form/donate-today>, click "YES" on the Stillwater Strong Relief button. The funds collected will remain in the Stillwater community for those directly affected by the wildfires.

The designated overnight shelter for wildfire victims is the Payne County Expo Center at 4518 Expo Circle E, Stillwater, OK 74075. This is a collaborative effort of the City of Stillwater, Payne County, and Red Cross (phone: 800-red-cross).

As residents are working through assessment, cleanup, demolition, and rebuilding their homes, many resources are available on the City of Stillwater website, including locations of trash roll-offs provided by Waste Management in neighborhoods that received the most impact, and information on how to dispose of potentially harmful chemical waste, and the streamlined permit process for residential demolition and plumbing.

For more information, go to stillwaterok.gov/wildfires.

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