

Fayette County Appraisal District

NEWS RELEASE

October 13, 2011

Landowners do not have to worry about losing their land's "open-space" appraisal designation (ag-value) due to drought conditions. The governor has declared that every county in the state is subject to a drought disaster. There are provisions in the Property Tax Code to protect landowners during natural disasters according to Karen Schubert, Chief Appraiser of the Fayette County Appraisal District. Section 23.522 specifically states that a drought declared by the governor creates an agricultural necessity to extend the normal time the land remains out of agricultural production. In addition to the drought, devastating fires have destroyed homes and affected thousands of acres of land. Special appraisal of land designated as open-space does not necessarily cease because of its inability to be used for agricultural purposes after devastating fires. We have been receiving calls from landowners reporting the sale of their livestock due to the lack of hay and or water. We will continue to work with landowners during the drought conditions. A postcard will be sent to all landowners receiving the "open-space" valuation (ag value) when the county has had sufficient rains to sustain a herd of livestock or hay production. Please understand that it is ultimately the landowner's responsibility to be aware when it is time to have your property back in ag production even if you do not receive a postcard. If you have any questions, please contact the Fayette County Appraisal District at (979) 968-8383.

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