



# Texas Department of Insurance | State Fire Marshal's Office

## Fire Investigation Report

**SENSITIVE**

Case #: 2026-603 Priority: 1 Investigator: Sergeant Kelly Vandygriff Status: Closed  
Day of fire: Sunday Date of fire: 5/17/2026 Time of fire: 3:21 pm Cause of fire: Undetermined  
Date of request: 5/27/2026 Date case assigned: 5/27/2026 Date of investigation: 5/28/2026  
Location of fire: 16250 Bezner Road  
City of fire: Amarillo County of fire: Potter  
Type of fire investigation: Agency Assist # of injuries: None # of fatalities: None

### Owner

Name: City of Amarillo Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Race: (select) Sex: (select) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's license #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance company name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Policy #: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of policy – structure: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of policy – contents: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adjuster's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Adjuster's phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agent's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agent's phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agent's address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Occupant

Name: Same Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Race: (select) Sex: (select) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's license #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance company name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Policy#: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of policy – structure: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of policy – contents: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adjuster's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Adjuster's phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agent's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agent's phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agent's address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Discovered** ☐ **Reported Fire**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Race: (select) Sex: (select) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's license #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Requestor

Name: City of Amarillo Mayor Cole Stanley Phone: (806) 378-3000  
Address: 601 S. Buchanan Street City: Amarillo State: TX ZIP: 79101  
Race: (select) Sex: (select) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's license #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Motor Vehicle

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vehicle use: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_ VIN#: \_\_\_\_\_ LP#: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other Information

Other Investigating Agencies: None  
Responding Fire Departments: Potter County Fire/Rescue, Amarillo Fire Department, multiple other agencies  
Weather Conditions: On-Scene Weather (16:19:46 hours): Relative Humidity (RH) was 8%; Winds were from the Southwest (SW) at 21 mph, with gusts recorded up to 44 mph.

### Administrative Section

Estimated property value: \_\_\_\_\_ Canine utilized? No If yes, agency used? \_\_\_\_\_  
Smoke alarms present? \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by: *Anthony L. Ware* Date: 8/14/2026



# STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

INVESTIGATION REPORT  
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

**SENSITIVE**



Case Number: 2026-603 Investigator : Sgt. Kelly Vandygriff

## Case Report Narrative

1. **Undetermined**
2. **16250 Bezner Drive, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas**
3. **Owner: City of Amarillo**
4. **Occupant: City of Amarillo Solid Waste Department (Landfill)**
5. **5/17/2026 (Sunday) @ 3:35 PM**

### **SYNOPSIS**

- 1.1 On Sunday, May 17, 2026, at approximately 3:21 PM, a 911 call reported fire at 16250 Bezner Dr. in Potter County, Texas. Potter County and Amarillo Fire Departments were dispatched and upon arrival they observed heavy smoke coming from inside the landfill, which lead them to discover a fire in the south side of the landfill at a pit designated as "Cell 10". On Monday, May 18, 2026, because of severe fire weather conditions, at approximately 3:08 PM the fire rapidly spread beyond the landfill property and ultimately destroyed over 50 homes located north and northeast of the landfill. On Wednesday, May 27, 2026, I was contacted by Amarillo Fire Marshal Cody Snyder who advised me that the City of Amarillo Mayor requested the State Fire Marshal's Office to respond and conduct an unbiased origin and cause investigation. I, Sergeant Kelly Vandygriff, was assigned to this investigation. On May 28, 2026, I travelled to Amarillo to investigate the events surrounding the fire on May 17, 2026.
- 1.2 The weather on scene at 4:19 PM on Sunday was reported to be: Relative Humidity 8%, southwest winds at 21 MPH gusting to 44 MPH. This information is from Potter County Fire Rescue Assistant Chief Jonathan Steven's report which is attached. The weather on Monday consisted of extreme fire weather conditions as well with relative humidity as low as 8% and southwest winds averaging 18 MPH, gusting to 43 MPH.
- 1.3 I was unable to conduct an origin and cause investigation of this fire for several reasons. The origin of the fire is within an active landfill dumping site, which is a hazardous location to occupy. It had also been modified from its original state at the time of the fire, which originally occurred on Saturday, May 16, 2026, prior to my arrival in Amarillo on Wednesday, May 28, 2026. It is clear through witness accounts of the responding fire personnel that the fire did originate in "Cell 10" of the Amarillo landfill and spread beyond the property because of extreme fire weather conditions. Conditions of the destroyed homes and property and the damaged homes and property had also been altered by property owners and civilian response clean-up crews prior to my arrival. Because of this information the cause of this fire is **UNDETERMINED**, with the area of origin being listed as Cell 10 of the Amarillo landfill.



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### **RIGHT OF ENTRY / FIRE SCENE EXAMINATION**

- 2.1 There was no entry onto anyone's property for the purpose of an origin and cause investigation.

### **EXAMINATION OF THE FIRE DAMAGED AREA**

- 3.1 Potter County Fire Chief Richard Lake took me on a tour of the fire damaged property from the furthest area where the fire travelled back to its origin at the landfill. Chief Lake showed me where he was positioned when the ember left the landfill property and ignited dormant and dry vegetation and quickly spread in the direction of the wind to the northeast into the residential areas of the county.

### **EXAMINATION OF LANDFILL PROPERTY**

- 4.1 The landfill area was not examined based on the information that the fire originated within an active landfill dumping site. Landfills are hazardous to occupy because of the items that are disposed of which create the possibility of hazardous gases and hazardous dust. There is also the danger of large moving vehicles.
- 4.2 The landfill had also been modified from its condition at the time of the fire by large amounts of dirt being placed onto the burning materials and the movement of the materials by large equipment operating in the area.
- 4.3 There would also be no way of ruling out every possible accidental cause that is present within the waste at a landfill to determine what items actually came into contact with each other to create the ignition sequence.

### **INVESTIGATION**

- 5.1 I received an email from Amarillo Deputy City Manager/Public Safety Director Andrew Freeman on Monday, June 1, 2026, in reference to this case. Mr. Freeman had included fifteen links to Facebook posts related to an ex-employee of the City of Amarillo by the name of Joshua



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Williams. I did view several of the posts and determined that the content did not constitute any criminal wrongdoing or indication of an intentionally set fire.

- 5.2 I received the incident reports from Potter County Fire Rescue related to this incident and a link to download pictures taken by a professional photographer and drone operator related to the incident. The reports are attached and the photos and videos have been placed into the case file.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Based on the information available at this time this fire is classified as **UNDETERMINED**.
- 6.2 This case is **CLOSED**.