

Informal Video Guidelines

This document outlines guidelines specifically relating to short videos, typically recorded on mobile devices, which are intended for immediate release and distribution via various Texas A&M Forest Service authorized social media outlets.

Content

The content of videos posted to social media should be relevant to agency directives and initiatives. This includes, but is not limited to, wildfires, emergency response, tree care and management, timber operations, etc.

Approval

Prior approval is not needed for capturing informal videos. Approval and distribution of informal videos through social media falls on social media managers. If issues regarding content or quality are identified, the individual responsible for the social media account will be notified and may be asked to remove the video or may be given suggestions for improvement of future videos. Access to social media accounts may be suspended or revoked if adherence to these guidelines and any subsequent suggestions or recommendations relating to social media videos is not met.

Quality

Video quality will vary depending on the device used to capture the video and the experience of the videographer. In general, videos should clearly and concisely convey the desired information. All Texas A&M Forest Service employees should be shown in proper uniform and/or appropriate PPE. When practical, the video device should be stabilized to limit any shakiness in the video. Videos requiring audio should be reshot or discarded if the audio is difficult to hear or inaudible. The video being posted should be reviewed by the videographer prior to posting to ensure that it is of acceptable quality and length.

Length

Informal videos should, in general, be as short as possible. Since you're relying on content instead of production value to drive engagement, it's important to make every second count. If things go quiet or dull for even a moment, viewers will lose interest and disengage. But, if you do have to communicate a longer or more elaborate message in your video, consider implementing these steps to make it as interesting as possible.

- Open with a hook or attention-grabber. It doesn't need to be overdramatic or misleading – simply lead with the most interesting, captivating part of your message.
- Show the best, most interesting content in the first minute of your video.



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- If you're speaking at the camera, don't be static – engage with the audience. Have high energy, show interest and passion for your message, make appropriate movements or gestures.
- Consolidate information. If you're making a video about proper burning of waste, demonstrate it while giving instructions. Don't wait until the very end to demonstrate.
- Consider being mobile – moving with the camera as you show what you're speaking about. Just make sure this is coordinated in advance. The camera's movements should be smooth and well framed – not jerky or lagging behind in any way.

Additional Guidelines

Videos longer than 5 minutes, videos created specifically to be distributed by communications office personnel and posted to the agency YouTube Channel, or videos that have been heavily edited must adhere to our formal [Video Production Guidelines](#), which include pre-production approval by the Communications and Marketing Advisory Committee.

Live Videos

Social media sites provide the option to post live videos. Live videos should be used only in situations where a pre-recorded video would be insufficient. It is strongly recommended that live videos be scripted to ensure that the desired information is communicated clearly and concisely. A camera stabilization device is recommended to ensure smooth video quality. All guidelines addressing content, approval, quality and length related to pre-recorded social media videos also apply to live social media videos.

Contact: [Communications and Marketing Advisory Committee](#)