



News Release

For more information, contact:
Wendy Burnett
478.751.3535
wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us

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NORTH GEORGIA BURN BAN BOOSTS AIR QUALITY


A ban on outdoor burning begins May 1 in 54 Georgia counties, primarily in the northern half of the state. The Georgia Forestry Commission works with the state Environmental Protection Division annually to remind people that during the hot summer months, ground level ozone increases, which can negatively impact air quality and people's health. Burning yard and land clearing debris may produce smoke and particulate matter that are linked to lung and heart disease in humans.

"From May through September, we all enjoy being outdoors," said Frank Sorrells, Chief of Protection for the Georgia Forestry Commission. "Open burning is limited during these months to help improve air quality and reduce the risk of wildfire."

Sorrells said Georgia's ongoing drought has contributed to increased wildfire activity, and above normal temperatures and below normal rainfall are predicted for the next couple of months, especially in the southern and coastal regions. While campfires don't fall under the burn ban, everyone is urged to be extremely cautious when doing any type of outdoor cooking or tending to campfires.

The burn ban will be in effect from May 1 - September 30, 2017. The 54 Georgia counties affected are: Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Bibb, Butts, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Columbia, Coweta, Crawford, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gordon, Gwinnett, Hall, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Houston, Jackson, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Lumpkin, Madison, Meriwether, Monroe, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Paulding, Peach, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Putnam, Richmond, Rockdale, Spalding, Troup, Twiggs, Upson, Walker and Walton.

Residents in Georgia counties not included in the annual burn ban will continue to be required to secure a burn permit from the Georgia Forestry Commission before conducting any outside burning, including prescribed burning. Permits can be requested online at GaTrees.org, or by calling 1-888-OK2-BURN. If conditions are safe for burning, permits will be automatically granted.



"We encourage everyone to become familiar with what types of open burning are allowed in their area," said Sorrells. "The Georgia Forestry Commission will be closely monitoring weather and fire activity to keep Georgians and their property safe."

For more information about annual summer burn restrictions, burn permits and services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit GaTrees.org.

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