



News Release

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DROUGHT IMPACTS OUTDOOR BURNING SAFETY

As summer turns to fall, many Georgia residents will add outdoor burning to their to-do lists. But with the state still gripped by a severe drought, the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) is sounding the alarm for “safety first.”

“The annual air pollution burn ban that covers much of north Georgia will be lifted on October first,” said Alan Dozier, Chief of Forest Protection for the Georgia Forestry Commission. “That’s when we normally see an increase in outdoor burning. Anyone who chooses to burn this year will have to pay very close attention to the dry conditions, and, as always, get a permit.”

Dozier said residents choosing to burn outdoors must first call 1-877-OK-2-BURN. With one call, homeowners can automatically find out if conditions are appropriate for burning fires measuring less than 6’ x 6’ in their area. The caller’s zip code, telephone number and the call’s date and time stamp serve as a burn permit for both the caller and the GFC. In some instances, specific conditions will prohibit burn permits from being issued.

Georgia experienced a severe wildfire season this year, fueled by the lingering drought. Parts of Georgia remain as much as 25 inches below normal in precipitation, and without increased tropical storm activity, dry conditions are expected to continue.

“Northwest Georgia and southwest Georgia are extremely dry,” said Dozier. “Wildfire potential increases when the winds kick up and bring down fall leaves. With everyone’s vigilance, Georgians can reduce the risk of fire and enjoy a beautiful autumn season.”

For more information on burn permits and forestry in Georgia, visit www.gatrees.org.

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