



## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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### **Reminder: Debris Burning is Banned Across North Carolina**

**RALEIGH** - The N.C. Division of Forest Resources wants to remind people that a statewide ban on all open burning remains in effect until further notice.

The N.C. Division of Forest Resources has banned all open burning and canceled all burning permits. The burn ban became effective Oct. 15, due to drought conditions across the state that have made forest fuels, such as pine straw and branches, extremely dry. There have been more than 6,155 wildfires this year, burning more than 33,846 acres statewide. North Carolina has on average, over a 10-year period, 4,931 wildfires with an average of 20,008 acres being burned. The ban on open burning will be in effect until further notice.

By North Carolina law (G.S. 113-60.25 and 113.60.27), the ban prohibits all open burning statewide, regardless of whether a permit was issued. The issuance of any new permits has been suspended until the ban is lifted. In addition to the \$100 fine, people in violation of the open burning ban may have to pay court costs.

The following are a few facts about the law regarding the ban on open burning:

- The ban does not apply to a fire within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling. County fire marshals have jurisdiction of burning within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling. A campsite (for example a tent, recreational vehicle, pop-up trailer, etc.) is not considered an occupied dwelling. The Division of Forest Resources has advised county fire marshals across the state of the burning ban and asked for their consideration of also implementing a ban on open burning.
- The burn ban does not allow for cooking fires beyond the 100 foot area of an occupied dwelling. Cooking is allowed using an enclosed grill or outdoor cooker.
- If a fire within that 100-foot area escapes containment, a North Carolina forest ranger may take reasonable steps to extinguish or control the fire. The person responsible for setting the fire may be responsible for reimbursing the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources for any expenses related to extinguishing that fire.
- Open burning includes burning leaves, branches and other plant material. In all cases, it is illegal to burn trash, lumber, tires, newspapers, plastics or other non-vegetative materials.
- Other local ordinances and air quality regulations may also impact open burning.
- Outdoor burning is also prohibited in areas covered by Code Orange or Code Red air quality forecasts.

Local fire departments and law enforcement officers, as well as officers with the N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission, are assisting the N.C. Division of Forest Resources in enforcing the burn ban.

For more information, contact Brian R. Haines at (919) 733-2162 ext. 234. Citizens can also contact a county ranger with the Division of Forest Resources or their local county fire marshal's office for more information.

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