



News Release

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State Forester Issues Burn Ban for South Georgia

Georgia's extreme drought is worsening and the risk of wildfires is rising, especially in southern region of the state. As a result, Georgia's State Forester today issued a ban on outdoor burning for 91 counties in the lower half of the state.

"We need everyone to take this situation seriously," **said Georgia State Forester and Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) Director Johnny Sabo.** "GFC's wildland firefighters are responding daily to a near-record number of wildfires. It's critical to remember that just one spark or ember can ignite a life-threatening wildfire."

Fully 98% of Georgia's total land area is currently in moderate to exceptional drought conditions. The number of wildfires statewide in April has also now risen above Georgia's five-year average.

"I want to thank Director Sabo, Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper, Georgia EPD, and all those working to address the impacts of this critical drought," **said Governor Brian Kemp.** "Georgia Forestry responders are working hard to battle the wildfires caused by these dry conditions, and I'm encouraging all Georgians to do their part in helping them by adhering to this burn ban."

The burn ban area includes counties below metro Atlanta, running from Harris County in the west all the way to Columbia County in the east and south to the Florida state line. This is the first time in the agency's history that a GFC mandatory ban on outdoor burning has been issued. **The provisions of the GFC Burn Ban Order, [found here](#), went into effect upon the State Forester's signature and will remain in effect for 30 days, unless otherwise extended.** The order prohibits, among other activities, prescribed burns as well as the burning of yard debris and agriculture material in the affected area.



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“The extreme drought conditions across Georgia are putting agriculture and forestry at significant risk, and I want to strongly encourage all Georgians to do the right thing and adhere to the Georgia Forestry Commission’s burn ban while these conditions persist,” **said Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler J. Harper**. “I am deeply grateful to Commissioner Sabo and the entire team at GFC for their tireless efforts to successfully contain wildfires across the state.”

Chance of rain is unlikely for most of the affected area in the coming days. GFC will continue to work closely with local responders, the Governor’s Office, the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Division, and other state and local partners to combat any wildfires and address the ongoing drought.

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