



## NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2020

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### **Volusia County Fire Rescue issues burn ban**

Volusia County Fire Rescue has issued an outdoor burn ban due to unusually high drought indicators. The ban will take effect at 12:01 a.m. Friday, April 3, and applies to the county's unincorporated areas, Oak Hill, Lake Helen and Pierson.

Under the burn ban, all outdoor burning, unless authorized by the Florida Forest Service, is prohibited. This includes the burning of yard trash, household paper products, bonfires, campfires, warming fires and cooking fires. Outdoor cooking done with a contained gas or charcoal grill (excluding a fire pit) is the only exception.

"It's crucial for the public safety and welfare that Volusia County Fire Rescue be available for first-response medical calls during this time and not have to be responding to brush and wildland fires, which are preventable," said Fire Chief Howard Bailey.

Violations of the ban are punishable by a fine up to \$500 and/or imprisonment in county jail for up to 60 days. Personnel from Volusia County Fire Rescue will issue violation notices to any person violating the burn ban and also will extinguish any fire not authorized by the Florida Forest Service.

Fire officials urge residents to be cautious with outdoor activities and offer these wildfire safety tips:

#### **Practice wildfire safety**

- Do not discard cigarettes from moving vehicles.
- Do not park a hot car or operate all-terrain vehicles on dry grass.
- Check lawnmowers and farm equipment for properly working spark arresters.
- Extinguish fires when cooking outdoors, and never leave fires unattended.

#### **Protect your home**

- Design and landscape your home with fire safety in mind. Allow a 30-foot buffer of non-combustible material around your home.
- Use non-combustible materials on the roof and clean the roof and gutters regularly.
- Teach family members how to use a fire extinguisher. Test smoke detectors regularly.
- Inspect chimneys twice a year and clean them once a year.
- Rake leaves and dead limbs and twigs. Clear flammable vegetation.
- Have a garden hose long enough to reach any area of your home and property.

#### **When wildfire threatens**

- Listen to the media or a weather radio for civil emergency messages about where the danger is.
- Prepare your family, pets and supplies in case you have to evacuate.
- If told to evacuate, do so immediately.

[www.volusia.org](http://www.volusia.org)

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- If evacuating, tell someone you are leaving and where you are going. Drive away from fire hazards and listen to public safety officials.