

Georgia Environmental
Protection Division
Air Protection Branch

Open
Burning
Ban

What it means to you.



Breathe...Don't Burn

Helpful websites:

Open Burning Ban Rules

- epd.georgia.gov/air/open-burning-rules-Georgia
- www.gatrees.org
- www.gfc.state.ga.us/about-us/contact-us/

To check if your county is issuing burn permits:

- www.gatrees.org/whoisissuingPermits2.cfm

For more information:

Open Burning Ban:

- Your EPD District Office: (see district info below)
- Your county's Georgia Forestry Commission
- EPD Air Protection Branch: 404-363-7000

Alternatives to Burning:

- Small Business Environmental Assistance Program: (toll free)-877-427-6255
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs: 404-679-4940
- For a list of landfills in your county, please call EPD's Solid Waste Management Program, Atlanta Office at 404-362-2692
- Your county's Georgia Extension Service
- Your county's Keep Georgia Beautiful Affiliate.

EPD District Offices for affected counties

<p><u>Columbia & Richmond</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPD East Central District Augusta Office: 706/667-4343 	<p><u>Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Lamar, Monroe, Peach, Pike, Twiggs, Upson Meriwether, Troup</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPD West Central District - Macon Office: 478/751-6612
<p><u>Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Dawson, Floyd, Forsyth, Gordon, Haralson, Lumpkin, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPD Mountain District Office: 770/387-4900 	<p><u>Carroll, Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Heard, Henry, Rockdale, Spalding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPD Metro District Office: 404/362-2671
<p><u>Banks, Barrow, Butts, Clarke, Hall, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Putnam, Walton</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPD Northeast District Athens Office: 706/369-6376 	

Georgia Environmental
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Suite 120
Atlanta, GA 30354
Phone: 404-363-7000
epd.georgia.gov/air



A special thanks to North Carolina Division of Air Quality for sharing their slogan, "Breathe...Don't Burn."

Why is an open burning ban needed in Georgia?

Parts of Georgia have been designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as "non-attainment" areas for ozone and particle pollution. This means that the air does not meet the federal air quality standards for these pollutants and can be unhealthy to breathe. Limiting open burning during the hot and sunny months of "Smog Season" will help decrease these pollutants and help improve air quality and health in Georgia.

What is smog?

Smog is mainly composed of ground-level ozone and particle pollution.

- Ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds (fumes from fuels, paints, solvents and vegetation) combine with nitrogen oxides (formed during the burning process) in the presence of heat and sunlight. It can cause inflammation to the lungs and cause permanent damage, even at very low levels. Ozone is a summer-time pollutant.
- Particle pollution, also called particulate matter, is a mixture of microscopic solids and liquid droplets suspended in the air. The particles are the result of a variety of sources, including diesel trucks, power plants, burning and industrial processes. Particles are extremely small – thirty can fit in the diameter of a human hair. Exposure to particle pollution can harm your lungs and your heart, especially in children and elderly citizens. Particle pollution is a year-round pollutant.

When is "Smog Season?"

Open burning is banned during "Smog Season," which is May - September. These months are the hottest, sunniest times of the year, when hot sun can intensify the creation of smog.

What are the rules of the open burning ban?

Don't burn anything from May 1 – September 30

Some exceptions:

- *Agricultural burning exemption
- **Forestry "prescribed burning" exemption
- Campfires or barbecues
- Fire-fighting training exemption, provided appropriate permit is issued
- Operation of open flame equipment exemption
- Explosive disposal in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor Safety Regulations

* Does not include land use changes

** Not exempted in the 19 county metro Atlanta non-attainment area: Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Newton, Paulding, Spalding, Rockdale and Walton.

Failure to adhere to the burn ban during May - September may result in fines.

Note: The Annual Smog Season Burn Ban is in addition to the long standing state-wide restriction on open burning based on population. This rule bans certain burning practices yearlong in areas where the population reaches or exceeds 65,000. For more information contact your local EPD district office.

What counties are included in the burn ban?

- **Metro Atlanta District Office:** Carroll, Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Heard, Henry, Rockdale, Spalding counties
- **Northeast District Athens Office:** Banks, Barrow, Butts, Clarke, Hall, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Putnam, Walton counties
- **East Central Augusta Office:** Columbia, Richmond counties
- **West Central District Office:** Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Lamar, Monroe, Peach, Pike, Twiggs, Upson, Meriwether, Troup counties
- **Mountain District Office:** Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Dawson, Floyd, Forsyth, Gordon, Haralson, Lumpkin, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker counties

What are alternatives to burning?

• Compost

Composting is nature's way of turning your yard "waste" into a valuable soil conditioner.



• Chip, shred or grind the debris.

Reuse on site as mulch, erosion control or walk paths.

• Haul the debris

- to a commercial or municipal processing /grinding /composting operation.
- to an inert waste landfill.
- to a construction and demolition (C&D) landfill.