

# Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Protection Division, Air Protection Branch

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **GEORGIA EPD ANNUAL BURN BAN BEGINS**

May 1 marks the official start of smog season (May 1 – September 30) in Georgia. For 54 counties in the state, that also means the annual ban on open burning will be in effect once again. The burn ban is an important part of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division's (EPD) plan to improve air quality during the hot summer months when ground level ozone and particle pollution are more likely to reach unhealthy levels.

EPD has developed a regional approach to improving air quality. "It takes a regional approach to reduce the amount of air pollution in Georgia and improve the health of our citizens. The burn ban is one such solution," says Heather Abrams, Branch Chief of EPD's Air Protection Branch. Citizens and businesses in these 54 counties are not allowed to burn yard and land-clearing debris during the burn ban season. Some actions, such as campfires and agricultural activities are exempt.

Cooperation from the community will help people who are at risk during this period, which runs through September 30. Those most at risk are the young, the elderly and those with respiratory, cardiac or pulmonary diseases.

For more information about alternatives to burning such as composting and chipping, please call the Department of Community Affairs at 404-679-4940 or the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division toll-free at 800-685-2443. Debris can also be hauled to a commercial processing/grinding/composting operation or to an inert or construction and demolition landfill. For a list of landfills in the your area, please call EPD's Solid Waste Management Program at 404-362-2692.

Citizens can get more information on the open burning ban by calling the EPD District Office in your area (phone numbers listed below) or EPD's Air Protection Branch at 404-363-7000. Small businesses can get help and information by calling EPD's Small Business Assistance Program toll-free at 877-427-6255.

Counties included in the ban and the appropriate EPD District Office's phone number follow:

• **East Central Georgia District Office: 706-792-7744** Columbia, Richmond

• **Metro Atlanta District Office: 404-362-2671** Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Fayette, Gwinnett, Heard, Henry, Rockdale, Spalding

• **Northeast District Office: 706-369-6376** Banks, Barrow, Butts, Clarke, Hall, Jackson Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Walton

· **West Central District Office: 478-751-6612** Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Lamar, Meriwether, Monroe, Peach, Pike, Putnam, Troup, Twiggs, Upson

· **Mountain District Office: 770-387-4900** Bartow, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Dawson, Douglas, Floyd, Fulton, Forsyth, Gordon, Haralson, Lumpkin, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker

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