



County of Caroline

Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management

PRESS RELEASE

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Caroline County Department of Fire and Rescue Reminds Residents of State and Local Open Burning Regulations.

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Caroline, Virginia - Forest fires started from open-air burning causes millions of dollars in damage each year. These fires also place a large strain on fire and rescue resources, with this in mind Caroline County Fire and Rescue would like to inform the citizens of Caroline that the Virginia Department of Forestry has placed a No Burning Law in effect beginning on February 15 at 4:00 P.M.

Briefly, the 4:00 p.m. Burning Law states that from February 15 through April 30 of each year, no burning is allowed before 4:00 p.m., if the fire is in, or within 300 feet of, woodland, brush land or fields containing dry grass or other flammable material.

Since forest fuels cure during the winter months, the danger of fire is higher in early spring than in summer when the forest and grasses are green with new growth. The 4:00 p.m. Burning Law is an effective tool in the prevention of forest fires.

Debris burning continues to be the leading cause of forest fires in Virginia. The 4:00 p.m. Burning Law is different from the burning bans, which are invoked only during periods of extreme fire danger.

Caroline County also has year-round regulatory ordinances that apply to open burning. In Caroline, residents are allowed to burn yard waste (leaves, trimmings, etc.). Residents burning within 300 feet of an occupied structure must obtain the neighbors permission before burning. Additionally, residents must notify the County's 911 Dispatch Center at 804-633-5555. This notification reduces the likelihood of false alarm responses by fire companies. No burn permits are required for open residential burning.

Larger burns of debris waste from property maintenance or construction are also allowed. The responsible parties may burn provided they are at least 500 feet from any occupied building unless the occupants have given prior permission. They must also notify the County's 911 Dispatch Center. They must obtain an open burn permit from the County Department of Fire and Rescue prior to burning. There is no charge for this permit. A representative from the Department of Fire and Rescue will make a visit to evaluate the site and offer advice for safe burning.

At no time may citizens openly burn items such as old tires, used oil, roofing shingles, or other petroleum based materials. These items give off toxic fumes and pollute waterways.

For more information on open burning, contact the Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management at (804) 633-9831.