



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
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www.mfc.ms.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WILDFIRE SEASON IS HERE

Jackson, MS – Timber production, farming and agriculture have a huge impact on the state's economy. Fire management is critical to improving and maintaining these resources. Prescribed burning, also known as controlled burning plays a vital part in the health of our lands. It helps to improve the growth of timber by removing non-native invasive species of grass, non-desirable understory plants, and pests that compete for water and nutrients in the soil. It also allows native grasses and forages to grow for wild animals to eat and removes fuels that could possibly create a catastrophic wildfire causing damage to the ecosystem.

Burning under certain weather conditions can greatly aid those wishing to do so. Temperature, relative humidity, and winds greatly affect a fire. Relative humidity below 25 percent and winds over ten miles per hour are not good conditions for controlled burning. Embers can often be carried long distances, causing spot fires as far as one-half mile away. It is recommended that private forest landowners consult with a certified prescribed burn manager prior to conducting a burn. They can assist in the development of a prescribed burn plan which allows the landowner to get the most benefit out of the burn while maintaining safe working conditions.

Safety minded fire managers obtain a burn permit from the Mississippi Forestry Commission. When you call to obtain a permit, you are given the current fire weather and informed if conditions are adverse to burning. Permits are issued on a daily basis and are obtained by dialing 1-800-240-5161 or 601-928-5261.

If you are obtaining a permit for yourself, please have your name, street address, phone number and the legal description of your land that you will be burning. This can be found on your deed, property taxes, or at your local courthouse. The Mississippi Forestry Commission asks for this information because that is how our firefighters find your property and the fire should anything go wrong.

If you are a forester or a prescribed burn manager, please have all of the prior information along with the property owner's name, phone number and their home address.

The phone numbers listed above are for Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Lamar, Pearl River, Perry and Stone Counties. Other numbers may be found on the Mississippi Forestry Commission's website at www.mfc.ms.gov or on our Facebook Page.

The number one causes of wildfires are woods arson and debris burning. The Mississippi Forestry Commission offers a reward of up to twenty-five hundred dollars upon arrest and conviction of anyone committing woods arson, which is a felony offense. Call 1-800-240-5161 if you have information regarding woods arson. If you spot a wildfire, dial 911 immediately.

Wildland fire season is here. On average, the Mississippi Forestry Commission responds to 3,000 wildfires that damage or destroy nearly 50,000 acres every year.

How YOU manage fire is very critical!

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