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*PRESS RELEASE*

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## **OUTDOOR BURN BAN BEGINS MAY 1<sup>st</sup> IN SPALDING COUNTY**

A ban on outdoor burning will begin May 1<sup>st</sup>, in 54 Georgia Counties primarily in the northern half of the state including Spalding County. This annual restriction is required by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Protection Division to enhance air quality during the summer months when high ozone levels negatively impact citizen's health. "Elevated ozone and particulate matter can contribute to watery eyes, breathing issues, and lung and heart disease" says Surgeon General Vice Admiral Vivek H. Murthy, M.D.

"The air is typically hot and stagnate when the summer ban on burning yard and land-clearing debris is in effect," said Spalding County Fire Chief, Kenny West. "That means less particulate matter that may influence air quality being released in the most populated areas of Georgia. Our fire personnel in conjunction with the Georgia Forestry Commission will be closely monitoring and responding to any outdoor burning, whose smoke could impact air quality."

The burn ban will be in effect from May 1 thru September 30, 2016 and affects the following counties: Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Bibb, Butts, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Columbia, Coweta, Crawford, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Floyd, Fulton, Gordon, Gwinnett, Hall, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Houston, Jackson, Jasper, Jones, Lamar, Lumpkin, Madison, Meriwether, Monroe, Newton, Oconee, Paulding, Peach, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Putnam, Richmond, Rockdale, Spalding, Troup, Twiggs, Upson, Walker, and Walton.

"As we move into late spring and the summer months in Spalding County, everyone needs to monitor their local conditions and remain vigilant when burning outdoors", said Chief West. "Even a campfire, barbecue grill, or an overheated lawnmower can spark a wildfire. By being vigilant we make it a safe and healthy summer of 2016."

For more information about the annual EPD summer burn regulations and burn permits, visit [www.SpaldingCounty.com](http://www.SpaldingCounty.com) or [www.GaTrees.org](http://www.GaTrees.org).

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