



GEORGIA'S OUTDOOR BURN NOTIFICATION SYSTEM BURN LAW CHANGES MESSAGE POINTS

- Some changes in the law have modified the responsibilities of those intending to burn vegetative debris outdoors.
- People planning to burn hand-piled leaves, or naturally occurring yard debris, are no longer required to formally notify the Georgia Forestry Commission.
- The GFC's online and toll free burn notification systems will reflect this change on July 1, 2021, and will no longer be processing notification calls.
- People planning to burn debris must take full responsibility for keeping their fires contained and are required to ensure that five safety standards are followed.
- Those standards can be remembered with the "TAKE FIVE STAR."

Before you burn, "Take Five," and remember the acronym, "S-S-T-A-R." Each of the star's five points represents a burning safety standard:

- S Space** – Burn location must be no less than 25 feet from any woodlands, forestland or field that contains brush, grass or other flammable material.
- S Space** – Burn location must be no less than 50 feet from structures, which includes homes, outbuildings, sheds and barns.
- T Time** – Burning must take place between sunrise and sunset.
- A Attendance** – Person responsible must attend burning at all times until fire is completely extinguished and there is no risk for burning to escape control.
- R Reasonable Precautions** – Person responsible must take reasonable and necessary precautions to prevent fire escape or spread from the original location.

Reasonable precaution examples include:

Continuous pressurized water source on site, such as water hose. Buckets of water or hand-held sprayers do not meet legal requirements.

Man-made or natural barrier to contain your fire such as bare soil, rocks, bricks or burn barrel.

Hand tools or fire-containing equipment on site, such as rake, shove, garden hoe, etc.

Weather awareness to NWS red flag warnings, High Fire Danger designation of Class 4 or Class 5 days and other hazardous conditions, such as prolonged drought, low relative humidity or high winds, etc.

- As always, the person responsible will be liable for damages to adjacent properties due to fire escape.
- An Unlawful Burn Notice may be issued for not following the above requirements and suppression charges may be levied by the GFC IF a burn ignites a wildfire as a result of any of the preceding five standards not being followed.
- The 54-county GA EPD ban on summer outdoor burning remains fully in effect, May 1-September 30.
- Agriculture, silviculture and land-clearing burns for residential or commercial development DO require notification to the county forest ranger and a permit IS still required for these activities.

