



Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division
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NEWS RELEASE/FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This release applies to the following counties: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hancock, Hawkins, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union and Washington

Date: April 7, 2010

Weather conditions in East Tennessee continue to be dry, with increased winds expected today. Most East TN counties will not be issuing permits due to these weather conditions. Yesterday, (Tues 6), 18 fires burned a total of 1400 acres across East TN, the largest being one 500 acre fire and one 200 acre fire in the Stoney Fork area of Campbell County, a 350 acre fire on Jenkins Mt in Carter County and a 150 acre fire near Snow Hill in Morgan County. Six fires were arson, eleven were escaped debris fires and one was caused by fireworks. Persons doing debris burning need to make sure they phone their local forestry office to obtain a burn permit. If permits are not being issued, it is because it is UNSAFE to burn. Persons caught burning without a permit will be issued a written citation and possibly fined/ be responsible for suppression costs/ damages to neighboring properties.

If you do obtain a permit to burn, make sure you take the following safety tips: 1) check local burn ordinances, 2) watch the wind, 3) have tools and help on hand to contain the fire, 4) dig a line down to mineral soil around the fire, 5) notify your neighbors, 6) do not burn adjacent to forest or grassland and 6) do not leave your fire until it is completely out (a state law). From **October 15th thru May 15th**, *all persons doing outdoor burning in Tennessee are required to obtain a FREE of cost burn permit from the Tennessee Dept of Agriculture, Forestry Division*. Burning without a permit during this time period is a Class C misdemeanor punishable by up to 30 days in jail and/or a \$50.00 fine, as well as suppression costs. To obtain a burn permit, call your local forestry office Monday thru Friday, between 8am and 4:30pm. ***(statewide permit #'s attached)*** Permitting allows the Division to stop burning if conditions are extreme, and to prevent waste time and gas used responding to false alarms. Remember that YOU are responsible for your fire and any damages incurred should it escape, as well as liable for suppression costs from state Forestry AND any fire departments that have to put out the escaped fire. If you have questions about burning conditions or how to maintain a safe fire, or if you have information about arson fires, contact your county Forestry office. If you questions/ concern about air quality/ pollution regulations, contact the state Dept of Environment & Conservation at 1-888-891-TDEC, or www.tdec.net/apc.

Finally, if you live in or near the forest or in the "Wildland Urban Interface", take time to make sure that your home or property can survive a wildfire. The easiest way to get started in to go to the State Forestry Divisions website and download the free FIREWISE brochure at the following website: <http://burnsafetn.org/>. Remember, you as a homeowner have the prime responsibility for your homes safety, and if firefighters are unable/ unavailable to defend a structure without putting themselves in danger, it would be more likely to burn.

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