

PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING FIRES DURING HOT, DRY AND DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

How hot is it?

Learn how to survive hot summer weather and what you need to know about fire safety in times of dry weather and drought conditions.

Do not burn trash, leaves or brush out doors.

There is currently a burning ban that has been incrementally expanded to include Baldwin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Morgan and Shelby Counties during the months of May, June, July, August and September. The reason for the burning bans has been to reduce the formation of ground-level ozone. Efforts to reduce ozone in Alabama have been largely successful. These are also some of the driest months of the year.

Create a Safety Zone.

Maintain a 30-foot or greater safety zone around your home that is clear of brush, tall grass, and other flammable vegetation. Fire moves more quickly up steep hills so extend that fire safety zone if your home is situated on a steep slope.

Use Fire-Resistant Plants and Trees.

Use fire-resistant species of plants and trees throughout your property and especially within your safety zone.

Maintain Your Lawn.

Keep trees and shrubs pruned around chimney outlets and stovepipes and keep your entire landscape mowed, raked, and free of dead limbs.

Use Spark Arresters.

Check and replace spark arresters — special mufflers that suppress fire-starting sparks — on any vehicle or equipment with an internal combustion engine. Use an approved spark arrester on chimneys and stovepipes to thwart the escape of burning cinders.

Store Firewood Safely.

Stack firewood at least 15 feet away and uphill from your home.

Cook Safely Outdoors.

Barbecue and the south go hand-in-hand. Practice safe grilling by maintaining a 10-foot brush-free zone around outdoor grills and propane tanks. After grilling, place ashes in a metal bucket and soak in water. Never leave a grill unattended.

Don't Park on Grass.

Don't park vehicles and other motorized equipment on dry grass or near shrubbery. Exhaust systems can far exceed the 500 degrees it takes to start a summer brush fire. If you need to pull off to the side of the road during a road trip, stay on the paved shoulder or find a nearby parking lot or rest stop.

Have Fire Extinguishers On-hand.

Keep fire suppression tools handy including working fire extinguishers, shovel, bucket of water, shovel, and a water hose that can reach all areas of your home and outlying structures.

Teach Children Fire Safety.

Teach children about the dangers of playing with fire and make sure they know what to do in the case of a fire, including an evacuation plan for the home.

Be Careful with Cigarettes.

Don't dispose of cigarette butts by tossing them out a car window or onto the grass.

Tip:

It's not enough to have a fire extinguisher. Know how to use it. If you have several, check the operating instructions for each because they do differ. Inspect extinguishers regularly.