

Media Advisory

from the South Carolina Forestry Commission



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 10, 2016

CONTACT

Doug Wood, Director of Communications
(803) 968-1576 CELL | (803) 896-8820 OFFICE
DWood@scfc.gov

Statewide burning ban remains in effect until further notice

Restriction on outdoor burning tied to resource availability, not to fire danger

COLUMBIA—Hurricane Matthew has come and gone, but the South Carolina Forestry Commission’s statewide burning ban remains in effect.

A State Forester’s Burning Ban prohibits outdoor burning, which includes yard debris burning and burning for forestry, wildlife or agricultural purposes. While campfires and open-fire cooking are not included in the ban, the Forestry Commission strongly advises all citizens to be extremely vigilant until the ban is lifted.

“We’ve had lots of calls wondering why there’s a burning ban when most of the state received so much rainfall from Hurricane Matthew,” said SCFC Fire Chief Darryl Jones. “We want people to understand that we issued the ban not because of elevated fire danger necessarily, but rather because so many firefighting and emergency personnel and resources are committed to hurricane-related response.”

After consultation with Gov. Nikki Haley and other emergency response organizations last week, State Forester Gene Kodama recommended declaring the ban to reduce possible wildfire ignitions. Local fire departments are supportive of the statewide burning ban as well, as it is intended to ease the strain on firefighting personnel – from both the Forestry Commission and from local fire departments – many of whom were dispatched to coastal regions to assist with evacuation procedures, law enforcement activities, damage assessment and now cleanup.

In addition to performing its normal wildfire suppression operations, the Forestry Commission deployed about 40 firefighting and law enforcement personnel and resources to coastal regions to support the state’s coordinated evacuation procedures. Additionally, thousands of firefighters and other emergency responders from local departments around the state are also engaged in hurricane response for the next several days.

The ban will stay in effect until further notice, which will come in the form of an official announcement from the Forestry Commission and SC Emergency Management Division.

###

As the only state agency responsible for wildfire suppression in all unincorporated areas of the state, the South Carolina Forestry Commission protects 12.9 million acres from wildland fire. More than 500 county, municipal and volunteer fire departments operate more than 1,100 fire stations in South Carolina. The Forestry Commission cooperates with these departments to prevent and control structural and wildland fires, employing highly trained firefighters and specialized equipment when fires burn into forested areas that are difficult to reach.

Did you know...?

An astounding 98 percent of all wildland fires are caused by human activities, and escaped debris burns are responsible for nearly 50 percent of them. South Carolina Forestry Commission firefighters respond to an average of 2,500 wildland fires every year, burning about 18,000 acres annually.