

# Media Advisory

from the South Carolina Forestry Commission



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, Nov. 10, 2016

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## Forestry Commission expands burning ban for *all* Piedmont counties in South Carolina

COLUMBIA—The South Carolina Forestry Commission has expanded its State Forester’s Burning Ban from five Upstate counties to all Piedmont counties, effective at 6 p.m. The counties covered by the ban include **Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg, Union and York.**

State Forester Gene Kodama expanded the ban this afternoon because of weather conditions in the Piedmont region that present an elevated risk of wildfire. The diversion of additional agency resources to a fast-growing wildfire in Pickens County also contributed to the expansion of the burning ban.

A wildfire on Pinnacle Mountain at Table Rock State Park has grown from 15 to 250 acres in the last 24 hours owing to these dangerous fire weather conditions. The agency is sending extra firefighters to the area in addition to deploying its Type II Incident Management Team.

Forecasts for the aforementioned counties over the next few days include extremely low relative humidities, which, combined with dry fuels on the ground, create the potential for outdoor fires escaping easily and spreading rapidly.

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 encourages all citizens in the affected counties to refrain from any unnecessary burning.

Residents in counties not subject to the burning ban are cautioned to be extremely vigilant when burning yard debris and/or conducting prescribed burns. State law requires that citizens outside of unincorporated areas notify the Forestry Commission before burning outdoors. The notification is a quick, easy, automated process, and the toll-free numbers for each county are provided at the link below:

<http://www.state.sc.us/forest/fyard.htm>

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*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.