



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mississippi Forestry Commission Announces Governors Proclamation, March is Wildfire Prevention Month

The Mississippi Forestry Commission is announcing, by proclamation signed by Governor Barbour, that March is wildfire prevention month. Although Mississippi has experienced some recent rain events in February, the state began 2008 with a 12 inch rain fall deficit from calendar year 2007. Many of the news stations around the state start the New Year at zero on January 1, 2008. This does not erase the deficit carried over from the previous year.

The Mississippi Forestry Commission asks that you ***THINK TWICE Before You Do Any Outdoor burning! Don't Burn on Windy Days because Carelessness Causes Wildfires.***

Also, create a 30 foot defensible space around your home and become Firewise by following these tips:

- Clear flammable vegetation up to 30 feet away from your house. You can leave some trees as long as their branches are 10 feet apart from other trees.
- Cut lower branches of trees 7-10 feet off the ground within the 30-foot defensible space.
- Eliminate ladder fuels by mowing tall grass, trimming shrubs, and pruning lower branches as described above.
- Keep the lawn watered and mowed short (3 inches or less) on all sides of all buildings.
- Each spring, clean leaf & needle fall that accumulates.
- Relocate woodpiles (firewood) at least 30 feet from structures.
- Clean the roof, gutters, and windowsills of leaves, needles, and other debris.
- Make sure your chimney has a spark arrestor.
- Trim all tree branches within 15 feet of the chimney.
- Clear the view of your house number and mailbox so emergency crews can see the 911 address & house number from the street.
- Trim all tree branches overhanging the house.
- Trim tree branches overhanging the driveway to a 14 foot vertical clearance for emergency vehicles.
- Clear all deadwood and dense flammable vegetation within the 30 foot defensible space.
- Remove flammable debris from under decks or balconies.

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