



# THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## EXECUTIVE ORDER

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BY THE GOVERNOR:

### STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR GEORGIA WILDFIRES

- WHEREAS:** Severe drought conditions existing across southeastern Georgia have created an extreme and widespread threat for wildfires; and
- WHEREAS:** The National Weather Service reports an elevated fire danger across southeastern Georgia as gusty winds and low humidity continue to exacerbate persistent drought conditions; and
- WHEREAS:** Since April 18, 2026, the Georgia Forestry Commission has responded to over 90 wildfires in the State; and
- WHEREAS:** As of April 22, 2026, the Pineland Road Fire in Clinch and Echols Counties has already burned approximately 16,516 acres and is only 10 percent contained, and the Highway 82 Wildfire in Brantley County has burned over 5,000 acres and is only 10 percent contained; and
- WHEREAS:** These unprecedented fire occurrences have spread and intensified rapidly due to the woody debris remaining in South Georgia from Hurricane Helene; and
- WHEREAS:** In response to the multiple active wildfires, many local governments have issued evacuation orders and local burning bans; and
- WHEREAS:** Due to the hazardous wildfire conditions throughout the State, on April 22, 2026, the Georgia Forestry Commission issued a 30-day ban on outdoor burning across 91 counties; and
- WHEREAS:** On April 21 and 22, 2026, the Federal Emergency Management Agency approved Georgia's request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant for the Pineland Road Wildfire and the Highway 82 Wildfire, respectively; and

- WHEREAS:** The wildfires, combined with extreme to exceptional drought conditions and ample dry fuel, pose a significant threat to property, critical infrastructure, natural resources, communities, and the general safety and welfare of the people of Georgia; and
- WHEREAS:** Assistance from the State is necessary to prepare for and respond to the evolving threats and circumstances in connection with existing wildfires and enhanced fire risks, as well as the corresponding hazardous conditions and anticipated impacts; and
- WHEREAS:** The Governor is vested with the emergency powers cited herein as the Chief Executive of this State; and
- WHEREAS:** As Chief Executive, the Governor is tasked with declaring a state of emergency “[i]n the event of [an] actual or impending emergency or disaster of natural or human origin ... within or affecting this [S]tate” under Code Section 38-3-51(a); and
- WHEREAS:** Code Section 12-6-89 establishes the Governor's authority “to declare and determine the existence and termination of” an extreme forest fire emergency and to “direct and commandeer all state agencies and personnel to assist the State Forestry Commission in such emergency”; and
- WHEREAS:** Code Section 12-6-17 allows the Director of the State Forestry Commission to “prohibit the setting on fire of any woods, lands, marshes, refuse, or other combustible materials within any county or counties or within any area within a county, or may permit such burning only upon such conditions and under such regulations as in his judgment are necessary and proper to prevent the destruction of property”; and
- WHEREAS:** Code Section 38-3-51(c) vests the Governor with the authority to bring emergency situations under control by issuing orders, rules, and regulations to protect the safety and welfare of the public; and
- WHEREAS:** Code Section 38-3-28 provides that “[a]ll orders, rules, and regulations promulgated by the Governor” have the force and effect of law; and
- WHEREAS:** In consultation with state emergency preparedness officials, I have determined that the following actions are necessary and appropriate to protect the continued strength of Georgia's economy and provide for the health, safety, and welfare of Georgia's residents and visitors.

**NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO CODE SECTIONS 38-3-28 AND 38-3-51, AND THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA, IT IS HEREBY**

**ORDERED:** That a State of Emergency exists in the following counties due to the prevailing wildfires and enhanced fire risks: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Baker, Ben Hill, Berrien, Bibb, Bleckley, Brantley, Brooks, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Calhoun, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Chattahoochee, Clay, Clinch, Coffee, Colquitt, Columbia, Cook, Crawford, Crisp, Decatur, Dodge, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Effingham, Emanuel, Evans, Glascock, Glynn, Grady, Harris, Houston, Irwin, Jeff Davis, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Lanier, Laurens, Lee, Liberty, Long, Lowndes, Macon, Marion, McDuffie, McIntosh, Miller, Mitchell, Montgomery, Muscogee, Peach, Pierce, Pulaski, Quitman, Randolph, Richmond, Screven, Schley, Seminole, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Tattnall, Taylor, Telfair, Terrell, Thomas, Tift, Toombs, Treutlen, Turner, Twiggs, Ware, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Webster, Wheeler, Wilcox, Wilkinson, and Worth counties (the "Affected Counties").

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That all resources of the State of Georgia be made available to assist in preparation, response, and recovery activities throughout the State, and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency shall activate the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan and the Georgia State Operations Center.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That state agencies shall coordinate all public and emergency information, activities, releases, and response efforts related to this emergency with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That the Georgia Department of Transportation and Georgia Department of Public Safety shall take all necessary action to ensure the expeditious movement of equipment and personnel associated with firefighter mobilization, as necessary and appropriate, through the State.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That state agencies shall provide sufficient personnel required for the staffing of the Georgia State Operations Center or other command,

control, and coordination points as may be designated by the Director of the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency and shall provide such personnel, vehicles, equipment, and other resources needed to protect life and property and to ensure continuation, restoration, and recovery of essential public services.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That the Administrative Order from the Georgia Forestry Commission instituting a temporary burn ban in the Affected Counties, issued on April 22, 2026, and attached hereto, is hereby incorporated into this order. Said Administrative Order shall become a part of this Order and shall continue in force and effect so long as this Order is in effect.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That the Georgia Department of Defense provide up to one hundred and fifty (150) Georgia National Guard troops to be used in preparation, response, and recovery efforts for this State of Emergency, including all appropriate equipment.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That said Georgia National Guard troops be called up to State Active Duty as necessary by the Adjutant General.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** Pursuant to Code Section 10-1-393.4, price gouging related to goods and services necessary for preparation, response, and recovery activities for this State of Emergency, including motor fuel, diesel fuel, and other petroleum products, would be detrimental to the social and economic welfare of the citizens of this State and is therefore prohibited.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That if one or more of the provisions contained in this Order shall be held to be invalid, in violation of the Georgia Constitution, in violation of Georgia law, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, violation, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provisions of this Order, but, in such case, this Order shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained within the Order.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That no provision of this Order shall limit, infringe, suspend, or supplant any judicial order, judgment, or decree issued pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or Constitution of the United States, nor shall any person use any provision this Order as a defense to an action in violation of a judicial order, judgment, or decree by any court created pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or Constitution of the United States.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That this Order does not suspend operation of any state or federal law or regulation, except as specifically described herein.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** The Office of the Governor may continue to issue guidance on the scope of this Order as needed through communication media, including social media, without need for further Executive Orders.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** All provisions of the Order shall be effective upon signature and shall be valid for a period of thirty (30) days, expiring Friday, May 22, 2026, at 11:59 P.M. unless this State of Emergency is renewed by the Governor.

This 22<sup>nd</sup> day of April 2026.

  
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GOVERNOR



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Larry Spillers  
*Roberta*

## **Administrative Order Instituting Burn Ban in 91 Counties**

**WHEREAS:** Pursuant to Code Section 12-6-83, the Georgia Forestry Commission, through the Director, is charged with directing and supervising all forest fire protection work in the state; and

**WHEREAS:** Code Section 12-6-17 provides that the Director may issue an order banning outdoor burning in one or more counties when, in his or her judgment, "drought or other conditions" make controlled burns of "woods, lands, marshes, refuse, or other combustible materials" unusually hazardous; and

**WHEREAS:** Such an order shall have the force and effect of law; and

**WHEREAS:** South Georgia is in exceptional drought conditions that continue to worsen; and

**WHEREAS:** There are presently an unusually large number of active wildfires in the state, many of which started from outdoor burns; and

**WHEREAS:** A temporary burn ban is necessary to preserve life and property due to unusually hazardous conditions.

**THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO CODE SECTION 12-6-17, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

That a temporary ban on the burning of any woods, lands, marshes, refuse, or other combustible materials shall go into effect in the following counties: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Baker, Ben Hill, Berrien, Bibb, Bleckley, Brantley, Brooks, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Calhoun, Camden, Candler, Charlton, Chatham, Chattahoochee, Clay, Clinch, Coffee, Colquitt, Columbia, Cook, Crawford, Crisp, Decatur, Dodge, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Effingham, Emanuel, Evans, Glascock, Glynn, Grady, Harris, Houston, Irwin, Jeff Davis, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Lanier, Laurens, Lee, Liberty, Long, Lowndes, Macon, Marion, McDuffie, McIntosh, Miller, Mitchell, Montgomery, Muscogee, Peach, Pierce, Pulaski, Quitman, Randolph, Richmond, Screven, Schley, Seminole, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Tattnall, Taylor, Telfair, Terrell, Thomas, Tift, Toombs, Treutlen, Turner, Twiggs, Ware, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Webster, Wheeler, Wilcox, Wilkinson, Worth (the "Affected Counties").

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That such temporary ban shall apply to all activities subject to regulation by the State Forestry Commission, including, but not limited to, prescribed silvicultural burns, agricultural burns, and the burning of leaf piles or yard debris, regardless of whether such activities require a permit from the State Forestry Commission.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That no permits for burning shall be issued in the Affected Counties for the duration of this Order.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That if one or more provisions in this Order shall be held to be invalid, in violation of the Georgia Constitution, in violation of Georgia law, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, violation, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provisions of this Order, and, in such case, this Order shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained within the Order.

**IT IS FURTHER**

**ORDERED:** That no provision of this Order shall limit, infringe, suspend, or supplant any judicial order, judgment, or decree issued pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or constitution of the United States, nor shall any person use any provision of this Order as a defense to an action in violation of a judicial order, judgment, or decree by any court created pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or Constitution of the United States.

**IT IS FURTHER**


**ORDERED:** That all provisions of this Order shall be effective upon signature and shall be valid for a period of thirty (30) days, expiring Friday, May 22, 2026, at 11:59 P.M., unless extended by the Director.

This 22 day of April 2026.

  
John J. Sabo  
Director, Georgia Forestry Commission

# GFC State Forester Burn Ban

## Legend

 Georgia Burn Ban Counties

