



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEWIDE BURN BAN ISSUED DURING PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

BATON ROUGE- State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning, in collaboration with Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, have issued a statewide cease and desist order for all private burning, pursuant to authority under R.S. 40:1602. Private burning shall only be allowed by permission of the local fire department or local government. This order is effective as of 8 a.m., March 25, 2020 and shall remain in effect until rescinded.

“This burn ban is necessary to supplement the governor’s ‘Stay At Home’ order aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19 due to the anticipation that there may be an increase in open burning occurring across the state as families look for ways to pass the time at home,” said State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning, “This order will assist in preventing potential fire-related dangers that could result in unnecessary fire service response as well as diminish airborne irritants caused by burning.”

This ban shall not apply to prescribed burns by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, by those trained and certified by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, or by those who conduct prescribed burning as a “generally accepted agriculture practice” as defined by the Louisiana Right to Farm Law (R.S. 3:3601 et seq.).

Violation of this Fire Marshal order could result in criminal and/or civil penalties.

(see page 2 for FAQs)

COVID-19 BURN BAN FAQs

1. Can I cook outdoors?

Yes, the use of barbecue pits, smokers and fire pits, in order to conduct brief, recreational cooking practices, is allowed during this burn ban.

2. Can I use my fire pit?

If you intend on using your fire pit for brief, recreational activities like roasting marshmallows or simply enjoying the evening sitting beside a fire, yes, you can use your fire pit.

3. Can I burn my brush, leaves and branches in my fire pit and/or barrel?

No, moving brush materials from a pile on your property to a contained environment to burn for an extended period of time is not allowed. One of the purposes of the ban is to limit the amount of smoke in the air. Changing the method of your burning is not in line with that purpose.

4. Can the farm down the road continue burning their fields?

Yes, the law allows exceptions for prescribed burns by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and by those who conduct prescribed burns as a “generally accepted agriculture practice” as defined by the Louisiana Right to Farm Law (R.S. 3:3601 et seq).

5. Can I get an exception to privately burn?

The law allows for local fire departments and governments to give permissions or opt out of the ban. However, we are hopeful that residents, fire agencies and local governments will take this opportunity to be a good neighbor by cooperating with this order.