

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Betsy Clayton, APR/CPRC
Communications Director
Lee County Government
239 533-2221
LeeCountyPIO@leegov.com

Lee Commissioners enact burn ban for all of Lee County

Fort Myers, FL, March 10, 2023 – The Lee Board of County Commissioners enacted a burn ban for unincorporated Lee County and municipalities effective immediately due to increasingly dry conditions throughout Southwest Florida.

The county’s ordinance bans “outdoor burning ignition sources,” including campfires, bonfires and trash burning. Grills for food and backyard fire rings are not included. Officials ask all county residents to be mindful of dry conditions and to use good judgment to mitigate potential for significant wildfires.

Extended weather forecasts are for continuing dry conditions, and there is an elevated risk of wildfires from fallen trees in undeveloped lands due to Hurricane Ian.

The Florida Forest Service offers residents information and tips at:

- Be Wildfire Ready: www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/Wildland-Fire/Fire-Prevention/Be-Wildfire-Ready
- Ready, Set, Go! Resources: www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/Wildland-Fire/Fire-Safety/Ready-Set-Go!-Resources

For the county to enact a burn ban, certain conditions must be met, including a Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) that reached or exceeds a value of 600. Lee’s index value today is a mean average of 602 out of 800. The county also coordinates with the Lee County Fire Chiefs’ Association and the Florida Forest Service, both of which support the ban.

This ban does not apply to prescribed burns authorized by the Florida Forest Service, authorized public fireworks displays permitted by Lee County and other government agencies, and fireworks sales authorized by state laws.

The burn ban is accomplished by the Board adopting a State of Local Emergency. Commission Chairman Brian Hamman signed that State of Local Emergency and the burn ban after the Board of County Commissioners voted at its regularly scheduled March 7 meeting to authorize him to do so when conditions were met.

County officials will continue to monitor the drought conditions to determine how long the burn ban will be in place.

To receive updates from Lee County Government, sign up for the newsletter here: www.leegov.com/resources/newsletters.