

Local Burn Ban Policy

April 21, 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect life, property, emergency responders, and natural resources by preventing wildfires during periods of elevated fire danger caused by drought, low humidity, high winds, or other hazardous conditions.

2. Authority to Declare a Burn Ban

A local burn ban may be declared by the Governing Authority, Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Fire Department, or other authorized official when conditions present an increased risk of wildfire.

When issued, a local burn ban supersedes all normal outdoor burning permissions, including previously issued burn permits.

3. Scope of the Burn Ban

When a burn ban is in effect:

- All outdoor burning is prohibited
- All burn permits are suspended and void
- Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Yard debris burning
 - Brush, leaf, or debris piles
 - Land-clearing or field burns
 - Agricultural or forestry burns (unless specifically authorized for emergency or public safety purposes)
 - NO open flame of any kind

4. Materials Always Prohibited

The following materials are illegal to burn at all times, regardless of burn ban status:

- Household garbage
- Plastics, rubber, or tires
- Treated or painted wood
- Construction or demolition debris
- Petroleum-based or synthetic materials

5. Enforcement by Law

Local burn bans are actively enforced.

- Law enforcement officers, including the Office of the Sheriff and municipal police, are authorized to:
 - Investigate suspected violations
 - Order the immediate extinguishment of illegal fires
 - Issue citations or summonses
 - Make arrests when violations constitute a criminal offense

Failure to comply with a lawful order to extinguish a fire may result in additional criminal charges.

6. Criminal Penalties and Liability

Violations of a burn ban may constitute misdemeanor or higher-level offenses under applicable law.

Individuals found in violation may be subject to:

- Criminal citations
- Fines
- Arrest
- Jail time as allowed by law
- Financial responsibility for fire suppression and response costs
- Additional charges if a fire escapes, causes injury, property damage, or environmental harm

Each day a violation continues may be considered a separate offense.

7. Duration and Termination

Burn bans remain in effect until officially lifted by the issuing authority and publicly announced.

Burn bans may be modified, extended, or terminated at any time based on fire and weather conditions.

8. Public Notification

Notice of a burn ban may be provided through:

- Official government websites
- Social media platforms
- Local media outlets
- Emergency notification systems
- Public postings or signage

Residents are responsible for remaining informed of current burn conditions.

9. Public Responsibility

Before engaging in any outdoor burning, residents must:

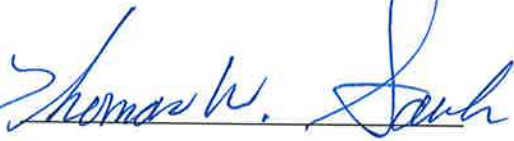
- Verify burn status on the same day
- Comply immediately with lawful orders from fire or law enforcement officials
- Contact the Georgia Forestry Commission

When in doubt — do not burn.

10. Summary

- Burn bans are emergency safety measures
- When active, no outdoor burning is permitted
- Burn permits are not valid during a burn ban
- Law enforcement will issue citations
- Violations may result in arrest and jail time
- Violators may be held financially responsible for emergency response costs

Agreed to on this 21st day of April 2026 by Pierce County.



Thomas W. Sauls
County Manager



Chris Todd
Fire Chief



Ramsey Bennett
Pierce County Sheriff



Donna Golding
County Clerk



