

## Florida Forest Fire Facts

- Florida has about 5,000 wildfires each year, with the most active time of the state's 12-month wildfire season occurring March through June
- On average, Florida experiences the second highest number of wildfires in the nation. During dry years, Florida experiences severe wildfires—wildfires that destroy homes, disrupt people's lives and impact our economy
- The continued drought and several hard freezes that killed grasses and woodland brush, and hurricane debris have significantly increased the occurrence of wildfires throughout Florida
- The Florida Division of Forestry administers Florida's outdoor burning and forest fire laws
- Prescribed fire is a cost effective tool to reduce fuel buildups which can cause dangerous wildfire conditions, thus providing increased protection to people, their homes and the forest
- The Division of Forestry has several education and mitigation programs aimed at reducing all types of human caused fire and assist with burning permits, fire mitigation and fire management services
- Prescribed fire, a cost effective tool to reduce fuel buildups which can cause dangerous wildfire conditions, is a recommended method of preventing wildfires and is often used by county foresters
- Escaped Debris Burning is one of the leading causes of wildfires in Florida. Approximately 20 percent of all wildfires in Florida are the result of escaped yard trash fires (tree leaves and branches)
- It is illegal to burn household garbage including paper products, treated lumber, plastics, rubber materials, tires, pesticide, paint, and aerosol containers
- Agricultural, silvicultural, landclearing, pile and acreage burning all require a burning authorization from the Division of Forestry
- Yard waste is vegetative debris such as grass clippings, brush, leaves, tree limbs, palm fronds, etc., that are a result of yard maintenance
- About 25 percent of all wildfires are intentionally set, making arson a leading cause of wildfire in Florida



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## ***Florida Forest Fire Facts cont'd.***

- Current education and programs like the Florida Firewise Communities program help urban landowners plan, build and maintain their homes to survive these flames
- Foresters encourage creating a buffer zone and landscaping to create resistance against fires, firebreak, such as tree thinning and removing yard debris and underbrush
- Fire behavior depends a lot on weather conditions. Wind can dry out grass, leaves, tree limbs and yard debris, creating substantial sources for a wildfire. Wind can also cause the fire to spread quickly
- High temperatures, low relative humidity, high/low atmospheric pressure and lack of rainfall contribute to wildfire

