



SEMINOLE COUNTY, FL (April 25, 2017) —Seminole County remains under a State of Local Emergency with a Countywide Burn Ban for the 28th consecutive day; the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KDBI) reading currently measures 554, which is considered “Very High” with a likelihood of an increasing due to forecasted dry conditions. Governor Rick Scott also declared a State of Emergency for Florida on Tuesday, April 11 in response to statewide wildfires.

Florida Forest Service and Seminole County Fire Department (SCFD) officials remain vigilant in protecting the area from wildfires by monitoring conditions. The Seminole County Office of Emergency Management (SCOEM) advises that the mandatory Burn Ban prohibits all outdoor burning not specifically permitted by the Florida Forest Service. Bon fires, campfires, and the burning of vegetative (yard) debris is not allowed at this time. The Burn Ban shall remain in effect until further notice. Any person who violates the Burn Ban can be punished either by imprisonment for a term not to exceed 60 days or a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or by both.

SCFD and SCOEM urge residents to call 911 only to report the sighting of flames or heavy stacks of smoke.

SCFD and SCOEM also offer the following preparedness tips for residents living in rural or densely-wooded areas considered to be at higher risk of being affected by wildfires:

- *Keep rooftops clean of all debris, such as pine needles and dead vegetation.*
- *Remove any dead or dying vegetation near homes which can become potential fuel for a wildfire.*
- *Keep any firewood stacked away from the house.*
- *Keep a buffer zone or “defensible space” of 30 feet from your home by keeping flammable materials such as brush piles out of this zone. Trees inside of the defensible space should be trimmed with their branches no less than 10 feet above the ground.*
- *Keep grass and weeds maintained properly.*
- *Consider landscaping with fire-resistant vegetation.*

For additional information, please call the Seminole County Office of Emergency Management, 407-665-5102. To report violation of the Burn Ban, please call the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office, 407-665-6650.