



POLLITT ISSUES BURN BAN FOR WICOMICO COUNTY

**For Immediate Release
Salisbury, MD
June 9, 2011**

Due to extreme heat and drought conditions, County Executive Richard M. Pollitt, Jr., has issued a burn ban order for Wicomico County effective immediately. Pollitt took the action on the advice of his Burn Ban Committee. The group is composed of representatives of the County Health Department, the Forestry Service, Emergency Management Services, fire fighters and a local meteorologist.

The executive has the authority to issue a ban for 7 days. Pollitt said that he expects the hot, dry conditions to continue into the foreseeable future and anticipates recommending that the County Council extend the ban indefinitely until weather conditions warrant a re-assessment by the Burn Ban Committee.

All outdoor burning is prohibited with the following exemptions:

- 1) Supervised burning in the presence of a volunteer or paid fire department on site with equipment, qualified personnel and available water supply for the duration of the event, as provided by State law;
- 2) Gas and charcoal grill for their proper use;
- 3) Campfires at Roaring Point and Sandy Hill campgrounds which must be monitored at all times. All such campfires shall be confined to designated fire rings, grills, fire pits, fireplaces or other facilities constructed for fires. Before breaking camp, fires should be drowned and completely extinguished.
- 4) Recreational campfires on private property and public campgrounds are permitted. The campfires are limited to a size of 2 feet in width and 3 feet in height;
- 5) The staging of professional fireworks displays.

Burn ban violations carry a \$500 fine per incident. County Planning & Zoning administers Burn Ban enforcement. Citizens may call 410-548-4860 to report violations during regular business hours. At other times, citizens may call the Sheriff's Department at 410-548-4891.

Pollitt urged all residents to practice caution while engaging in the exempted burning practices, saying, "I suggest that citizens keep a garden hose and fire extinguisher nearby while using their gas or charcoal grills or enjoying a recreational fire. Also, all fires should be completely extinguished and should never be left unsupervised."

Pollitt added that all burning permits are voided for the duration of the Burn Ban and that the Health Department will not be issuing burning permits until further notice.

####

Released by Jim Fineran, Wicomico County P.I.O. 410-548-1974
jfineran@wicomicocounty.org