



Alex Gottschalk
County Administrator
Director of Emergency Management

Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors

Post Office Box 307 • Boydton, Virginia 23917

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Jim Jennings
Chairman
Andy Hargrove
Vice-Chairman
Claudia H. Lundy
David Brankley
Sterling Wilkinson
Tom Tanner
Brenda Blackwell
Kirk Gravitt
Dennis Spence

DECLARATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY DUE TO SERIOUS FIRE HAZARDS AND INVOKING THE PROVISIONS OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2022 PROHIBITION OF OPEN BURNING ORDINANCE

Whereas, Section 10.1 - 1142 of the *Code of Virginia* requires that between February 15 and April 30 of each year, no fire be set for the purposes of controlling or removing brush, leaves, grass, or debris near a woodland, brushland, or field containing inflammable material except between the hours of 4 PM and 12 AM;

Whereas, we are currently within the calendar window set forth by Section 10.1 -1142 of the *Code of Virginia*;

Whereas, Mecklenburg County has experienced a prolonged period of dry conditions, resulting in forest lands, fields, and brushlands becoming increasingly dry and susceptible to fire, thereby magnifying the concerns expressed through the laws of the Commonwealth by creating restrictions during the calendar window;

Whereas, due to those dry conditions, Mecklenburg County Emergency Services and local fire departments have responded to an increased number of brush fires in recent weeks;

Whereas, the National Weather Service forecast indicates continued dry conditions, low humidity, and wind, with little to no measurable precipitation expected over the next 7 to 10 days, further enhancing fire risk;

Whereas, these conditions create an extraordinary fire hazard endangering life and property within Mecklenburg County and warrant exceeding the not prior than 4 PM burn ban to avert further non-intentional wildfires and avoid taxing the resource availability of the County's emergency system;

Whereas, the *Code of Virginia* envisions such circumstances by providing a more widespread prohibition to the Commonwealth in Section 10.1 - 1158 of the *Code of Virginia*;

Whereas, pursuant to the Mecklenburg County Burn Ban Ordinance, as enacted by the Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2022, the prohibition of open burning *omnibus horis* is permissible when such dry conditions that may result in serious fire hazard are declared to exist by the Director of Emergency Services, in consultation with the Chair of the County Fire Chief's Association and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, provided that a declaration of local emergency to institute the prohibition is issued under Section 44 - 146.21 of the *Code of Virginia*;

and



Alex Gottschalk
County Administrator
Director of Emergency Management

Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors

Post Office Box 307 • Boydton, Virginia 23917

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Jim Jennings
Chairman
Andy Hargrove
Vice-Chairman
Claudia H. Lundy
David Brankley
Sterling Wilkinson
Tom Tanner
Brenda Blackwell
Kirk Gravitt
Dennis Spence

Whereas, the Director of Emergency Services provided notice that such hazardous conditions do exist on April 6, 2026, and the Chair of the County Fire Chief's Association and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors provided their assent to such notice on April 6, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNDER THE AUTHORITY AFFORDED BY THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, I HEREBY DECLARE THAT:

1. The default burn restriction provided by the Commonwealth during the month of April is deemed insufficient due to the existence of hazardous fire conditions now present in Mecklenburg County.
2. The widespread dry conditions constitute a local emergency, and a declaration of such emergency is hereby issued pursuant to Section 44 - 146.21 of the *Code of Virginia*.
3. Accordingly, during such local emergency, a countywide prohibition of all open burning where serious fire hazard exist is hereby instituted, pursuant to the County Ordinance adopted by the Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2022, and in accordance with the restrictions and penalties of Section 10.1 - 1158 of the *Code of Virginia*.
4. During such local emergency, it shall be unlawful for any person to burn leaves, grass, brush, debris, or any material, or to ignite or maintain any open fire within 300 feet of forest lands, fields, or brushlands containing inflammable vegetation during any hour of the day or night.
5. The penalty for the violation of the provisions of this ordinance is a Class 3 misdemeanor for each separate offense.
6. This local burn ban shall remain in effect until such time as the Director of Emergency Services provides a declaration that these hazardous conditions have abated and the local emergency can therefore be terminated.
7. Mecklenburg County Emergency Services shall coordinate with local fire departments, law enforcement, and other appropriate agencies to ensure enforcement and public safety.
8. The public shall be notified of this declaration by all practicable means, including local media outlets, social media, and direct notification to public safety agencies.

Declared this 6th day of April, 2026, with an effective date beginning on April 7 at 4:00 PM.