

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **SUMMER BURN BAN BEGINS MAY 1ST**

SUFFOLK, VA (April 27, 2021) The Suffolk Department of Fire & Rescue's Fire Prevention Bureau wants to advise citizens that there is no open air burning allowed from May 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30, 2021. This restriction comes from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and was also adopted as an Ordinance by Suffolk's City Council in January 2007 to improve the City's declining air quality and to reduce the number of responses for refuse, grass, brush and woodland fires.

The open burn ban includes all types of burning from burning in a barrel to commercial land clearing operations. The use of special incineration devices is also included. In Suffolk, failure to comply with the burn ban can result in a fine of up to \$2,500 and one year in jail as well as a bill for extinguishing the fire.

Citizens are encouraged to take advantage of the City of Suffolk's bulk pickup service to remove yard debris or to carry the debris to a local landfill for disposal. In cases where large quantities of debris are involved, property owners may want to consider hiring a contractor to remove the debris.

Commercial fire pits, fire bowls and chimineas are considered recreational fires by City Code and do not require a permit. Only approved materials (firewood) may be burned and the fire must be constantly attended until it is extinguished. Some method of extinguishment must be available (fire extinguisher, garden hose, etc.) for immediate utilization. The Code also states these devices shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and shall not be operated within 15 feet of a structure or combustible material. These devices are exempt from the "Summer Burn Ban"

For additional information on open burning in the City of Suffolk, go to [www.suffolkva.us/open-burning-and-recreational-fires](http://www.suffolkva.us/open-burning-and-recreational-fires), or contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at 514-4550.

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