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Advisory from the Alabama Forestry Commission: Caution Urged with All Burning

With limited amounts of rain predicted for Monday, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) is advising people to use extreme caution with all debris burning and outdoor fires. For the remainder of the week, drier conditions are expected to return, with no significant precipitation in the weather forecast. At this time of year with lower humidity and March winds, fires can quickly spread out of control, not only threatening lives, but also endangering homes and property, as well as resulting in damage to Alabama's forests.

Both number and size of wildfire occurrences have already increased, according to fire officials with the AFC. Over the last three days, 89 wildfires have burned more than 1,265 acres of forestland across the state.

"The existence of dryer conditions, combined with lower humidity and gusty winds, could potentially contribute to hazardous wildfire behavior," said State Forester Rick Oates. "Although no burn restrictions have been issued, the Forestry Commission encourages everyone to be very cautious with fire until conditions improve."

It is Alabama state law to obtain a burn permit **before** burning any woodland, grassland, field, or wood debris greater than one quarter acre or within 25 feet of flammable material. All necessary safety precautions should be exercised when doing any type burning. Be sure to clear down to mineral soil around the area to be burned. Have enough tools, equipment, and manpower to safely control any fire. Once started, stay with the fire until it is completely out. To obtain a burn permit or for more information, call the Alabama Forestry Commission at 1(800) 392-5679.

The mission of the Alabama Forestry Commission is to protect and sustain Alabama's forest resources using professionally applied stewardship principles and education, ensuring that the state's forests contribute to abundant timber and wildlife, clean air and water, and a healthy economy. For more information about the fire situation in your area or any other forestry related issues, contact your local Alabama Forestry Commission office or visit the AFC website at www.forestry.alabama.gov

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