



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

660 North Street, Suite 300
Jackson, MS 39202

www.mfc.ms.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2018

Media Contact:
Brighton Forester
Public Relations Director
(601) 500-0489 cell
bforester@mfc.ms.gov

Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line *Fall Wildfire Prevention and Awareness*

JACKSON, Miss. (October 12, 2018) – Wildfires occur year-round in Mississippi. The Mississippi Forestry Commission responded to and suppressed 2,318 wildfires that burned 33,574 acres in Fiscal Year 2017. As dry cold fronts begin to move through Mississippi this fall, it is important to be aware of the potential for increased wildfire activity.

Report a wildfire

To report a wildfire in the state of Mississippi, call **1-833-MFC-FIRE (1-833-632-3473)**. The statewide wildfire reporting number allows people to quickly request emergency wildfire assistance from the Mississippi Forestry Commission, which will dispatch the necessary wildfire suppression resources to the appropriate location.

“Having one easy-to-remember phone number streamlines the wildfire reporting process for the public and our emergency management partners,” said Randy Giachelli, Fire Chief, Mississippi Forestry Commission. “The same number can also be used to obtain a burning permit anywhere in Mississippi.”

Wildfires in Mississippi are often human-caused

Last year, the majority of wildfires in Mississippi were caused by people burning debris that escaped control. A small spark can start a large wildfire when conditions are dry and windy. Check your local weather forecast - do not burn on dry, windy days. The wind carries embers long distances, causing new spot fires as far away as one-half mile from the burning area.

“Nationwide, nearly 9 out of 10 wildfires are human-caused, which means 9 out of 10 wildfires could have been prevented with proper care,” said Charlie Morgan, State Forester, Mississippi Forestry Commission. “Sadly, debris burns that escaped control were the number one cause of wildfires in Mississippi last year.”

Wildfires are known to move at speeds of up to 14 miles per hour - quickly endangering lives, homes, and natural resources. The best way to prevent devastating wildfire occurrences is never to let one start. Help the Mississippi Forestry Commission [Stop Wildfires at the Starting Line](#). Visit www.mfc.ms.gov/wildfire-prevention for wildfire prevention tips and information.

To learn more about the Mississippi Forestry Commission, please visit our [website](#) and follow us on social media: [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

###

About the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Established in 1926, the [Mississippi Forestry Commission](#) (MFC) protects the state's valuable 19.8 million acres of forestland from wildfire, manages approximately 480,000 acres of forested School Trust Land, and delivers quality forest management services and assistance to both rural and urban landowners. Our mission is to provide active leadership in forest protection, forest management, forest inventory, and effective forest information distribution, necessary for Mississippi's sustainable forest-based economy. Mississippi's forestry and forest products industries have a \$12.79 billion economic impact and employ almost 70,000 people. Forestry consistently ranks as the state's second most valuable agricultural commodity, right behind the poultry industry. The MFC looks forward to the continued privilege of caring for Mississippi's trees, forests, and natural resources.

