



NEWS RELEASE

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HUDGENS URGES CAUTION IN DRY SEASON

Atlanta – Last week, a brush fire burned out of control, displacing a family of seven in Albany. Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph T. Hudgens advises Georgians to use caution when clearing and burning debris and always have an adult supervising the area.

“We recommend that citizens call the Georgia Forestry Commission, or their local fire authorities, before burning anything, and never leave the fire unattended,” Hudgens said. “Many counties and municipalities will have prohibitions against outdoor burning, or at least require a daily permit.”

Hudgens offers the following tips when raking leaves:

- * Clear leaves, weeds, brush and other vegetation at least 30 feet from your home; never pile leaves close to the home. If you bag your leaves, store bags away from your home.
- * Keep a water hose nearby to put out any stray flames or sparks.
- * Visit the Georgia Forestry Commission website, <http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/>, to check on the burn permit information for your area. The GFC updates the site each morning.

Last year, there were approximately 10,269 reported brush and grass fires in Georgia. Uncontrolled backyard fires can spread rapidly, polluting the air and often starting forest fires.

If a fire gets out of control or a brush fire occurs then call 911 immediately.

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