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With the wet start of this month, it can be hard to think about a drought or a fire threat. However, on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020, the state of Virginia went under a Burn Ban until Thursday, April 30, 2020.

[According to the Virginia Department of Forestry](#), all open-air burning is prohibited until after 4:00 p.m. A fire must be at least 300 feet away from any home, business, and wooded area.

The ban impacts any burning, such as bonfires, trash, brushfires, campfires, and more. When burning after the 4 o'clock hour, please make sure to have the proper equipment just in case the fire starts to spread around the given area.

The ban is issued in the afternoon because of temperatures dropping, calm winds, and the percentage of humidity increasing. The less humidity in the air typically means dry air, which is one of many causes of fires.

According to the Virginia Department of Forestry, 95% of open wildfires are caused by human interaction. Another way an open fire can spread is through high winds, constant dry days in the forecast, and even tossing out a cigarette of the car window.

This law dates back to the 1940s, which helped prevent the number of wildfires that occurred in the early spring months.

The consequences for burning before 4:00 p.m. are a Class 3 misdemeanor and a fine of no more than \$500.

As Smokey the Bear always says, "Remember ... Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires."

If this article interested you, check out the [Early Weather Outlook for Spring 2020](#) on The Tartan.

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