



# County of Cayuga

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County Administrator  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Prevent Wild Fires by Adhering to Open Burn Ban until May 14**

As a reminder to all in Cayuga County, there is a state-wide open burn ban in effect from March 16th through May 14<sup>th</sup>, which is issued yearly by the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. Open burning of debris is the single largest cause of spring wildfires in New York State. When temperatures are warmer and the past fall's debris and leaves dry out, it creates a tinder-like condition and wildfires can start and spread easily and be fueled by winds and lack of green vegetation. Although there are some very specific agricultural exemptions, all are cautioned to avoid open burning. Controlled fires can and often will become uncontrolled.

In the past several days, with the break in the weather, open burning has picked up significantly across the county. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, there were three sizeable grass/brush fires that escalated quickly and created dangerous situations that required significant emergency responses. The following day, April 24<sup>th</sup>, an open burn that was believed to be put out spread to grass and brush and ultimately caused a local resident to lose a barn, tractor, and a recreational vehicle/camper.

These situations pose a great risk to people, property, and the environment. All are encouraged to follow the regulation and refrain from open burning through May 14<sup>th</sup>. Violators of the state's open burning regulation are subject to both criminal and civil enforcement actions, with a minimum fine of \$500 for a first offense.

Please continue to help all of your first responders protect life, property and the environment.

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