

Pursuant to the Cherokee County Code of Ordinances Sec. 28-109. - Exceptions to burning prohibitions. The fire chief may allow open burning when special circumstances warrant exceptions to prohibitions against burning. Special circumstances would include:

- (a) Disposal of vegetative debris from storm damage with the approval of state official(s).
- (b) Any other special circumstances as determined by the fire chief.

During the later afternoon of July 20, 2023, a round of severe weather hit much of the County causing substantial tree damage and power outages for many County residents. The County's Office of Emergency Management in conjunction with Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services have requested through GEMA that the Georgia EPD lift the burn ban for Cherokee County so that our residents can begin disposing of their storm debris by burning it. The Georgia EPD has agreed and provided the attached memorandum lifting the burn ban for Cherokee County through October 1, 2023 – the normal date the burn ban is set to expire.

Citizens are encouraged that burning vegetative debris resulting from storm damage be conducted only after other options such as mulching or chipping have been exhausted.

Permissible storm debris includes:

- Trees, brush, and stumps that have fallen or been cut due to the weather event that occurred on Thursday, July 20, 2023.
- Routine land clearing burning of debris larger than 6" in diameter will require the use of an air curtain destructor (ACD) and must be permitted through the Cherokee County Fire Marshal's Office. M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (678) 493-6290.
- Other storm damage debris, such as that from damaged or destroyed housing, is classified as solid waste, and may not be burned. Burn piles shall not contain household trash, tires, plastics, paints, roofing materials, chemicals, oils, insulation, ductwork, or electrical wire. Local solid waste collection and recycling centers should be used to dispose of these items.
- To minimize smoke from the burn pile, the amount of dirt on the material should be limited, and the prevailing winds should be away from public roadways and residential areas.
- Any burning of vegetative debris, whenever feasible, should be conducted between 10:00 a.m. and one hour before dark.

Furthermore, restrictions on other types of open burning during this period remain in effect.

This exception to outdoor burning prohibitions is intended for the unincorporated areas of Cherokee County and the Cities of Nelson and Waleska. Citizens within the incorporated areas of Ball Ground, Holly Springs, Canton, and Woodstock shall follow the guidelines set forth in their respective jurisdictions' outdoor burning ordinances.