



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ozone Season Begins Today

Outdoor Burning Restricted in Some Counties

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 1, 2023) - May 1 marks the beginning of ozone season in the Commonwealth, and for some, that means taking extra care to learn before you burn. From May 1 through September 30, outdoor burning in Boone, Boyd, Bullitt, Campbell, Jefferson, Kenton, Lawrence, and Oldham counties is restricted to protect air quality.

Ground-level ozone is a summertime health risk, created when pollutants chemically react in the atmosphere in the presence of heat and sunlight.

“Outdoor or open burning contributes to ozone pollution, especially when the weather turns warmer” said Michael Kennedy, director of the Division for Air Quality. “Normally, we think of ozone as something that protects us when it’s up high in the atmosphere. But when ozone occurs at ground level, it’s a serious problem for human health.”

From May through September, outdoor burning of household rubbish, brush, tree limbs, leaves and natural growth from land clearing is not permitted in Boone, Boyd, Bullitt, Campbell, Kenton, and Oldham counties. A portion of Lawrence County is also subject to open burning restrictions during ozone season. Open burning is restricted year-round in Jefferson County.

All of these counties have, at one time or another, exceeded air quality standards for ozone or particulate matter pollution.

Many people may not realize that burning trash – at any time of the year – is illegal in all Kentucky counties. State law prohibits the outdoor burning of many materials including plastic, tires, cans, coated wire, carpeting and food waste. In addition, the burning of trailers, buildings, and construction and demolition debris such as shingles, drywall and insulation is prohibited.

Painted, stained or treated wood products such as fence posts, pallets, and furniture are illegal to burn, because they release dangerous toxins into the air. Items that cannot be recycled should be taken to a state-permitted landfill.

To report illegal open burning or to learn more about open burning restrictions in your area, please call the Division for Air Quality at 502-782-6592 or email burnlaw@ky.gov , or visit the division's website at eec.ky.gov/Air.

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