

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION NO. 2026-1
A PROCLAMATION DECLARING A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY
IMPOSING A BURN BAN**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 252, Florida Statutes and St. Johns County Ordinance 2021-4 (St. Johns County Emergency Management Ordinance), the Board of County Commissioners, may issue a proclamation declaring a state of local emergency upon making certain determinations and findings; and

WHEREAS, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index, a soil moisture measurement that is a continuous reference scale for estimating the dryness of the soil and duff layers, and has St. Johns County currently measured at 514 with relative humidity of 40%, the Fire Danger Index suggests a moderate to high fire danger; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Drought Monitor is a joint effort of the National Drought Mitigation Center, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The U.S. Drought Monitor depicts the location and intensity of drought across the country using 5 classifications: Abnormally Dry (D0), showing areas that may be going into or are coming out of drought, and four levels of drought (D1–D4). The U.S. Drought Monitor denotes portions of St. Johns County classified as D3, indicating extreme drought conditions due to unusually low rainfall during the past months; and

WHEREAS, any open burning creates unacceptable risks for accidental or careless ignition of dry vegetation; and

WHEREAS, the Board may take actions to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, such orders when filed with the Clerk of Court have the force of law, and all existing laws, ordinances, and rules which are in conflict are suspended to the extent of the conflict pursuant to Section 252.46 (2), Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds it necessary to promulgate an emergency order to protect human life and animal life and to avert the overwhelming destruction of property that could result from a wildfire.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT THE FOLLOWING IS PROHIBITED IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA:

1. Open burning, except (a) outdoor grills used in preparing food; and (b) commercial land clearing where on-site inspection and approval has been granted by the Florida Forest Service, on a case-by-case basis, and it is determined there will be sufficient fire suppression equipment and personnel on-site.

2. (1) The sale, use and/or discharge of items listed in Section 791.01 (4), Florida Statutes (Fireworks) using explosive or combustible compounds; (2) use or discharge of flares, and the use of outdoor burning devices (excluding attended and monitored barbecue/cooking equipment); and (3) any otherwise lawful outdoor burning, such as lawn, debris or trash burning.
3. The parking vehicles with catalytic converters in high grassy areas.
4. No matches or cigarettes, etc., are to be thrown from vehicles
5. Any person violating any executive order issued pursuant to this Proclamation or any person who willfully fails or refuses to comply with the order or orders of any duly authorized law enforcement officer or personnel charged with the responsibility for the enforcement of such executive orders shall, upon conviction therefore, be punished in accordance with Section 252.50, Florida Statutes.
6. If any provision of the Proclamation is invalidated by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions of the Proclamation, which shall continue to have the full force and effect of law.
7. Pursuant to Section 252.38(3)(a)(5), Florida Statutes, a state of local emergency shall be limited to 7 days in duration. The state of local emergency may be extended as necessary in 7-day increments either by the Board at a regularly scheduled or special meeting, or by the Chair, or, in the absence of the Chair, the County Administrator, or her designee.

PASSED AND ADOPTED, effective immediately, by the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, this 20th day of April 2026.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ST.
JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: _____

Clay Murphy
Clay Murphy,
Chair

ATTEST: Brandon J. Patty,
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

By: *Crystal Smith*
Deputy Clerk

