



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pasco County wildfire and smoke conditions update

~~Burn ban remains in effect in Pasco County~~

PASCO COUNTY, FL --- Drought conditions and heavy smoke continue to be issues in Pasco County. A county-wide burn ban remains in effect. Here is the latest information from [Pasco County Emergency Management](#):

All **camping, bike and hiking trails in Starkey Park** are also closed until further notice, due to safety concerns and to provide access for firefighters. **No open flames** are allowed in Pasco County parks until further notice. (*Campfires, grills/barbeques, etc.*)

Residents and commuters in areas surrounding Starkey Park should expect periods of **heavy smoke** on the roads for 30 to 45 days. Please use headlights (not hazards) and slow down when driving through smoke. Signs are posted along SR 52, SR 54 and 589 Suncoast Parkway to alert drivers to the latest conditions.

For **fire updates** on acreage and containment of fires in Pasco County follow:
https://twitter.com/FFS_Withlacooh.

A **burn ban** remains in effect for all of Pasco County. No burning of trash, garbage or yard debris is allowed and the county is issuing citations for burn ban violations. Burn ban information:
<http://bit.ly/2pWgw8Q>.

- *Grills (both propane and charcoal) may be used for the preparation of food on private property as long as a grate is maintained over the flames; cooking is performed in a suitable piece of equipment designed to contain the flames, heat.*

All Pasco County residents are urged to **conserve water** and to follow lawn watering rules. See full press release on water conservation here: <http://bit.ly/2pe9dp3>.

[Pasco County Schools](#) has the latest information regarding school closings/cancellations due to smoke from the fire on the district's website: www.pascoschools.org and social media sites.

2-2-2 PASCO COUNTY WILDFIRE AND SMOKE UPDATE

No **donations** are needed at this time.

A joint press conference was held on Monday, May 8, 2017 that included: Pasco School District, Pasco County Government, Pasco County Emergency Services, Pasco County Fire Rescue, Florida Forest Service, Florida Department of Health-Pasco County and the Pasco Sheriff's Office. Topics included how schools will be impacted from the fire, health issues, law enforcement support, and update on the fire in Starkey Park. See press conference at the following link: <http://bit.ly/2pA2nes>.

[The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County](#) cautions citizens that wildfire smoke is a respiratory irritant that can cause scratchy throat or irritated eyes and nose. Smoke can also worsen conditions such as asthma and other chronic respiratory or lung conditions. Dust generated from increased wildfire response activity on dirt roads may also worsen these conditions.

The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County offers these tips to protect your family from smoke:

- Pay attention to local air quality reports, news coverage or health warnings related to smoke.
- Use common sense when outside conditions are smoky. Avoid prolonged outdoor activities.
- If smoky conditions occur in your area, anyone with existing medical conditions should limit outdoor activities.
- If smoky conditions occur, stay indoors and run your air conditioner, if you have one. Keep the fresh air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent bringing additional smoke inside. For best results, run the air conditioning with re-circulated air.
- Follow your doctor's advice about taking medications and follow your asthma management plan if you have asthma or other lung diseases. Call your doctor if symptoms worsen.
- For more information on how smoke from fires can affect your health please visit: [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/air/air quality/airdata.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/air/air_quality/airdata.htm).

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