

DEC Forest Rangers, County Emergency Management Services and local fire departments want to remind residents that a ban on open burning of brush and other woody materials is in effect until May 15. Brush burning is by far the most common cause of wildfire starts during the spring fire season.

The National Weather Service has issued a Fire Weather Watch for the State of Vermont for Friday, March 23. Conditions in New York will allow wild fires to start easily and spread quickly due to the unusually warm temperatures, clear skies, low humidity, breezy winds, lack of snow and large amounts of dead, dry vegetation.

DEC Region 5 Environmental Conservation Officers have already issued more than a dozen tickets and warnings to people burning brush since the ban went into effect on March 16. Violating the ban is a misdemeanor offense with possible penalties of \$500 to \$18,000 in fines and up to 1 year in jail for the first offense and up to \$26,000 in fines and up to 1 year in jail for subsequent offenses.

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