

AN ORDINANCE
TO TEMPORARILY LIMIT OUTDOOR BURNING DUE TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS

WHEREAS, Lowndes County has experienced prolonged dry weather resulting in drought conditions; and

WHEREAS, these drought conditions have significantly increased the risk of wildfires and the spread of uncontrolled fires; and

WHEREAS, open burning of yard debris poses a serious threat to public safety, property, and natural resources during periods of extreme dryness; and

WHEREAS, Lowndes County desires to take reasonable and necessary measures to reduce fire hazards and protect the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Lowndes County that:

1. Temporary Restriction.

All open burning of yard debris, including leaves, limbs, grass, and other vegetative matter, is hereby restricted within the unincorporated area of Lowndes County effective February 11, 2026.

2. Prohibited Activities.

No person shall ignite or allow the burning of yard debris outdoors except as provided in this Ordinance.

3. Exemptions.

This Ordinance shall not apply to:

- controlled burns conducted by government agencies or authorized personnel for forestry or public safety purposes,
- fires used for cooking in approved grills or fire pits, provided they are attended and comply with applicable safety regulations, or
- agricultural or forestry burns conducted under a valid permit and in accordance with state law and Georgia Forestry Commission guidelines.

4. Enforcement.

This Ordinance shall be enforced by Lowndes County officials and their designated departments, including but not limited to the Lowndes County Fire and Rescue and Lowndes County Code Enforcement.

5. Violations.

Any person who violates any provision of this Ordinance or who fails to do anything required by this Ordinance shall be amenable to the process of the Magistrate Court of Lowndes County. The maximum punishment for a violation of this Ordinance shall be a fine of \$1,000 or imprisonment for six months, or both.

6. Additional Remedies.

In the event any provision of this Ordinance has been violated or is being violated, in addition to any other remedies, the County may institute injunction or other appropriate action or proceeding to prevent or abate such violation.

7. Duration.

This Ordinance shall remain in effect until drought conditions improve and the Board of Commissioners formally rescinds this Ordinance.

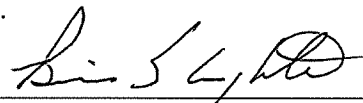
8. Prior Ordinances and Resolutions.

The provision of this Ordinance shall apply in addition to and shall not repeal any prior ordinance or resolution regarding this same subject.

9. Public Notice.

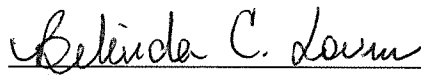
Lowndes County shall provide notice of this Ordinance through appropriate public channels including the County website, social media, and local news outlets.

SO ADOPTED this 10th day of February, 2026.



Bill Slaughter, Chairman

ATTEST:



Belinda C. Lovern, Clerk