

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

EMERGENCY ORDER 2026-16

AN EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA, DECLARING A LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY AND IMPOSING A BURN BAN IN BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA PURSUANT TO SECTION 252.38, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Bradford County, Florida codified in Chapter 26 of the Bradford County Code of Ordinances (“the Code”) the authority to invoke the powers provided for in Chapter 252, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 26-8(a) of the Code, the County Commission granted authority to the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to declare a state of local emergency from time to time when it is determined that conditions exist giving rise to such a declaration; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 26-8(d) of the Code, authorizes emergency declarations include the prohibition of open fires and other burn restrictions; and

WHEREAS, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index, a soil moisture measurement in which a measurement of 400 denotes a significant danger of fire, and has Bradford County currently measured at 591, with drought conditions expected to remain high to very high for the month of February; 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 Bradford County Florida as: D1 – Moderate Drought 100%; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Weather Service in Jacksonville, Florida, Bradford County is currently experiencing weather conditions such as an unusually early season freeze, and recent above normal high temperatures that will lead to further drying of soil conditions with little rain on the horizon; and

WHEREAS, the current and forecasted weather conditions increase the probability of dangerous wildfires and a review of all relevant factors indicates the current conditions pose a severe threat to Bradford County, Florida; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2026, Carolyn Spooner, Chairwoman of the Board of County Commissioners of Bradford County, Florida issued this Emergency Order declaring a state of local emergency in Bradford County, Florida, and issuing a ban on burning which may lead to the loss of life and / or property.

NOW THEREFORE, the above recitals are hereby adopted and incorporated into this Emergency Order pursuant to the Code, Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, and to the authority provided this Emergency Order, dated March 24, 2026, declaring a state of local emergency in Bradford County, Florida, and as follows:

- (1) A burn ban is imposed in the entirety of Bradford County, Florida.
- (2) The outdoor burning of yard trash, household paper products, bonfires, campfires, warming fires, outdoor fireplaces, chimeneas, and cooking fires is prohibited unless: 1) authorized by the Florida Forest Service; or 2) for the cooking of food exclusively within a contained gas or charcoal grill.
- (3) The setting of fires to any grass, brush, or forest covered land, is prohibited unless authorized by the Florida Forest Service.
- (4) Any person, firm, partnership or corporation who violates the provisions of this Emergency Order, unless an exemption is approved or granted by the Florida Forest

Service, shall be guilty of a second degree misdemeanor, punishable as provided in Chapter 775.083, Florida Statutes, or, in the case of individuals, the members of a partnership and the responsible officers and agents of an association or corporation, punishable as provided in Sections 775.082 or 775.083, Florida Statutes.

PROCLAIMED and ORDERED for the period commencing on **May 19, 2026**, and continuing through **May 25, 2026**.

Board of County Commissioners
Bradford County, Florida



Carolyn Spooner, Chairwoman