

# Division of Forestry

## BURNING PERMITS

Because of its geographic location, Tennessee has a wide spectrum of forest types and open areas. It has impenetrable laurel thickets in the mountains of east Tennessee and remote cypress swamps in west Tennessee. Between these extremes are found upland hardwood forests, native pine stands, cedar glades, cove hardwoods, pine plantations, bottomland hardwoods and various stages of open, brush and forested land. All these types of vegetation provide the fuels for wildland fires. As you might suppose, each has its own unique characteristics which when combined with the variations in topography and weather, make fire suppression a challenging endeavor.

Burning permits focus attention on the safe use of fire. From October 15 through May 15, anyone starting an open-air fire within 500 feet of a forest, grassland, or woodland must by law secure a burning permit from the Division of Forestry. Permits are not required for burning in containers such as a metal barrel with a ½" mesh screen cover. Anyone needing to burn within an incorporated city should contact city authorities about any local burning ordinances. Many towns and cities have their own burning regulations that supercede the Division of Forestry's burning permit program.

Permits are free of charge and may be obtained by calling the phone number listed below for the county in which the burning will be done. Burning permits are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except on holidays. Permits may be obtained in advance for weekends and holidays.