

OPEN BURNING CAUSING MULTIPLE FIRES

The Spring time fire season has begun in Lancaster County. As of 1 pm today, there have been multiple brush fires in Lancaster County with most if not all caused by careless open burning. Fires have occurred in Mt. Joy Borough, Eden Township, Caernarvon Township, Brecknock Township and others.

Randall S. Gockley, County Emergency Management Director is urging citizens to use caution and only burn when there is minimal wind and conditions are not as dry. "These fires endanger the lives of the firefighters, as well as threaten structures. The conditions today are not suitable for open burning."

Last week a fire in the southern end of the County burned 10 acres. Gockley noted that most municipalities have open burning ordinances that must be followed. These establish where and under what conditions citizens can burn. Before doing any burning, people should contact their Township or Borough office and get a copy of the ordinance.

State air quality laws only allow normal household trash and natural brush to be burned. Burning of items such as tires, structural components and plastics are illegal within the Commonwealth. Gockley stated "The fire service and governmental agencies are not only concerned of the fire spreading, but also to assist in keeping our air and environment safe. People off-time burn to reduce costs in getting trash removed or recycled and this impacts the community emergency services."

If you must burn, citizens should stay by the fire at all times and never leave it unattended. Rakes, shovels and if possible a garden hose should be nearby. The fire needs to

be extinguished by night fall. Some municipalities require a permit prior to burning.

Citizens with specific questions should contact their local municipal office or fire Company for additional information. People doing illegal burning can be fined and held responsible for damages caused by the fire.

END OF RELEASE

For additional information contact Gockley at 664-1200