



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

Board of County Commissioners News Release

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Time To Prepare For More Wildfire Activity

Bartow, Fla. (December 6, 2017) — As we prepare for the busy season for wildland fires, it is important to remember Florida is unique because it has a 12 month wildfire season. On average, the most active part of the year coincides with the dry season, which is December through June. Wildfire activity often peaks during the months of March, April and May due to the occurrence of lightning with dry thunderstorms that are common during that time of year.

Polk County Fire Rescue and Polk County Emergency Management are closely monitoring the constantly changing fire weather for Polk.

The 2016-2017 wildland fire season was extremely busy in Polk and many people were affected, especially in the eastern part of the county. Wildland fires in the Indian Lake Estates area made local and national headlines more than once.

“Our firefighters also battled many other wildland fires with our municipal partners throughout the county that didn’t make news headlines,” said Fire Chief Tony Stravino. “Our firefighters partnered with other agencies and together hundreds of homes were saved. Sadly, some were also lost or damaged, which is why it’s important to take safety measures now, to reduce the risk of losing your home due to a wildfire.”

As a last resort, Polk also has the ability to issue a burn ban if conditions warrant. “We were forced to implement a burn ban from March 31 to June 9, 2017. Our primary goal during wildland season is to prevent loss of life and property,” Stravino added.

The Florida Forest Service has great information on its website with programs such as the national Ready, Set, Go! program, as well as Firewise Communities.

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