

**PUTNAM COUNTY EMERGENCY ORDER PROCLAMATION NO. 2026- 011
AN EMERGENCY ORDER REGARDING OPEN BURNING DURING THE
FOREST AND BRUSH FIRE DECLARED EMERGENCY.**

WHEREAS, by Proclamation dated February 2, 2026 the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners declared a state of local emergency for the forest and brush fires in Putnam County; and

WHEREAS, the Keetch-Byram Drought Index, a soil moisture measurement that is a continuous reference scale for estimating the dryness of the soil and duff layers, and has Putnam County currently measured at 479 with relative humidity of 22%, the Fire Danger Index denotes a moderate danger of fire; 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 portions of Putnam County Florida as D3 (Extreme Drought) on the western end, and D2 (Severe Drought) for the rest of the county indicating worsening drought conditions through February; and

WHEREAS, any open burning creates unacceptable risks for accidental or careless ignition of dry vegetation; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the police power, the Board may take actions to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Florida Statute Section 252.46 authorizes counties to promulgate orders and rules as are necessary for emergency management purposes; and

WHEREAS, such orders when filed with the Clerk of Court have the force of law, and all existing laws, ordinances, and rules which are in conflict are suspended to the extent of the conflict pursuant to Florida Statute Section 252.46 (2); and

WHEREAS, the law enforcement authorities of the State and its political subdivisions enforce such orders pursuant to Florida Statute Section 252.47; and

WHEREAS, a violation of a duly promulgated order is a second degree misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500.00 for each offense and by a term of imprisonment of up to sixty (60) days in jail for each offense; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds it necessary to promulgate an emergency order to protect human life and animal life and to avert the overwhelming destruction of property that could result from a wild fire.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT THE FOLLOWING IS PROHIBITED IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA:

1. Open burning, except (a) outdoor grills used in preparing food; and (b) commercial land clearing where on-site inspection and approval has been granted by the Florida Forest Service, on a case-by-case basis, and it is determined there will be sufficient fire suppression equipment and personnel on-site.
2. (1) The sale, use and/or discharge of items listed in Florida Statute 791.01 (4) (Fireworks) using explosive or combustible compounds; (2) use or discharge of flares, and the use of outdoor burning devices (excluding attended and monitored barbecue/cooking equipment); and (3) any otherwise lawful outdoor burning, such as lawn, debris or trash burning.
3. The parking vehicles with catalytic converters in high grassy areas.

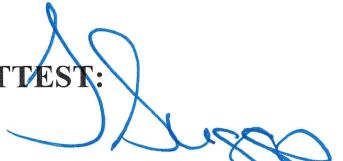
4. No matches or cigarettes, etc., are to be thrown from vehicles
5. Any person violating any executive order issued pursuant to this Proclamation or any person who willfully fails or refuses to comply with the order or orders of any duly authorized law enforcement officer or personnel charged with the responsibility for the enforcement of such executive orders shall, upon conviction therefore, be punished in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 252.50.
6. If any provision of the Order is invalidated by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions of the Order, which shall continue to have the full force and effect of law.
7. The Board of County Commissioners recognize the circumstances and conditions which necessitate the foregoing Resolution may extend beyond seven (7) days, and therefore, the Board of County Commissioners hereby authorize Chairwoman Wilkinson to extend the local State of Emergency in her sole discretion. Any subsequent extension shall be reported to the Board of County Commissioners at the following regularly scheduled Board of County Commission meeting.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED, effective immediately, by the Board of County Commissioners Chair of Putnam County, Florida, this 2nd day of February 2026.

**BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS, PUTNAM
COUNTY, FLORIDA**

By: Leota Wilkinson
Leota Wilkinson,
Chairwoman

ATTEST:


Terry Suggs,
County Administrator