



Virginia Department of Forestry Fire Laws and Prescribed Burning

May 10, 2018

Learn & Burn



Introduction

■ Heather Tuck

Eastern Region Fire Specialist

3 years experience with VDOF

Contact Information:

Cell: 804-317-3737



Outline

DOF

Suppression

Law Enforcement

Training

Options for prescribed burning



Who is the Department of Forestry?

- **Mission: We protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians.**



What Does VDOF Do?



VDOF



Areas of Focus





Fire Suppression

- Fire can be dangerous and sometimes does get out of control
- On call to respond to wildfires in Virginia
- Fire Investigation





Fire Law Enforcement

- Field employees are sworn in “Forest Wardens”
- Have the authority to enforce forest and fire laws
- These laws are found within the Code of Virginia



Why have fire laws?

- SAFETY!
- These laws reinforce general principles of safe burning practices



Fire Laws

- 10.1-1142 A **Reasonable care and precaution**
- “It shall be unlawful...to set fire to....material unless he previously has take **reasonable care and precaution**, by having **cut and piled** the same or **carefully cleared around** the same to prevent the spread of fire...”



Fire Laws

- 10.1-1142 B **4PM Burn Law**
- February 15th through April 30th
- "...unlawful...for any person to set fire to...any brush, leaves, grass, debris or field containing dry grass or other inflammable material capable of spreading fire within **300 ft** of any woodland..."



Fire Laws

- **10.1-1142 C Exemption**
- Exemption to 4pm burn law
- Only applies to certified prescribed burn managers
- Only for specific reasons including:
control of invasive species, wildlife
habitat establishment, management of
natural heritage resources



Fire Laws

- 10.1-1142 D **Unattended/150 feet**
- “Any person who builds a fire in open air, within **150 feet** of any woodland...shall totally extinguish the fire before leaving the area and **shall not leave the fire unattended.**”
- Class 3 misdemeanor



Fire Laws



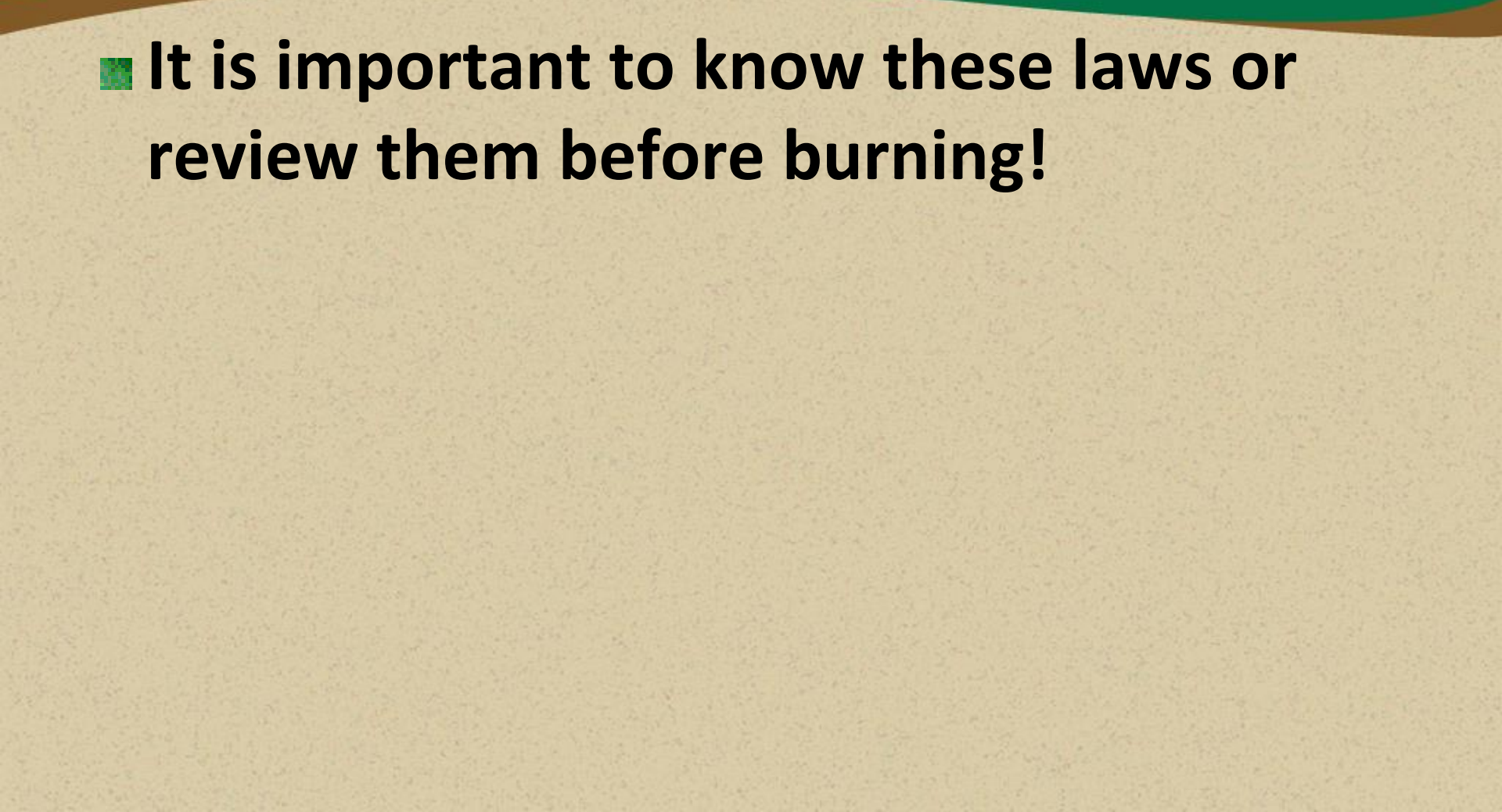
- 10.1-1141/10.1-1142 E
- **Collection of suppression costs,
Negligently or Intentionally / Associated
with section 1142**
- Will receive a bill from the DOF for the
cost of putting out the fire



Fire Laws

- **18.2-88 Property of another is damaged or destroyed**
- **Class 4 misdemeanor**



A background image showing a forest fire with bright orange flames and black smoke rising from the trees.
A solid green wavy banner that spans the width of the slide.
A light beige textured area that occupies the bottom two-thirds of the slide.
■ It is important to know these laws or review them before burning!



Certified Prescribed Burn Manager

- Code of Virginia 10.1-1150.1-6
- Another job of the DOF is to develop a prescribed burn manager program.
- 3 days of classroom training
 - ◆ Covers topics such as fire science, fire behavior, ignition techniques, burn plans, executing a burn



Certified Prescribed Burn Manager

■ Benefits:

- ◆ Can apply for exemptions to the 4pm burn law
- ◆ Class will give you a larger knowledge base
- ◆ Could help with liability



Certified Prescribed Burn Manager

Upcoming course!

When: September 25-27, 2018 Fee: \$50

Where: Dept of Forestry HQ

900 Natural Resources Dr.,
Charlottesville, VA 22903

To register: Contact Sandy Mills

Sandy.mills@dof.virginia.gov



Management Recommendations

- Prescribed burning is a normal management practice recommended by our foresters
- If you are interested in prescribed burning on your property, but would like someone to else to conduct the burn, there are a few options.



Burn Options

- Contact your local Department of Forestry representative (www.dof.virginia.gov)
- Can provide you with a list of local contractors who do prescribed burning



Burn Options

- Also, DOF does prescribed burning for landowners
- Rates:
 - ◆ \$30.00 per acre for site prep
 - ◆ \$25.00 per acre for understory or grass burns



Conclusion

- Fire can be a great tool, but it is important to use proper safety measures and know the fire laws before deciding to burn.



Questions?

