Written by Debbie Gregory
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With the dry conditions reaching the critical level, Lafayette Fire Chief Keith Scruggs says he doesn't remember it ever being this hot and dry during the first month of summer.

"It's usually late July and August before we reach these critical conditions with soaring temperatures and no rainfall," the Chief said. "We have answered numerous fire calls in the last few days and one firefighter was transported by the Macon County EMS (running 10/33 traffic) to the Emergency Room from the scene of a grass fire on Carter Branch Road Sunday afternoon, July 1st, suffering from severe dehydration and heat exhaustion."

Some of the hottest temperatures on record have been reached these past few days and that coupled with no rain has led to the City of Red Boiling Springs issuing a ban on shooting fireworks, along with a volunteer restriction of water.

The Red Boiling Springs Mayor and Water Commissioner are asking for volunteer restrictions of water for such a length of time as is necessary or advisable for the general welfare of the customers of their system.

"We also ask everyone to look for water leaks and report these to the city at 699-2011, or and employee or police officer," said Mayor Bobby Etheridge. "We are sorry for this inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation. We are doing everything we can to provide customers with safe drinking water."

"Unfortunately we are also issuing a ban on shooting fireworks due to the extreme dry conditions," said the RBS Mayor, "and the 4th of July celebration has been cancelled with plans to reschedule the fireworks, street dance and festivities this fall. The Thomas House and The Palace have also cancelled their holiday fireworks."

Chief Scruggs issued a press release in Lafayette on Monday afternoon, July 2nd, stating that due to the lack of measurable precipitation along with unusually high temperatures that

conditions across our area have become very dangerous to the spread of uncontrolled fires, with the emergency services receiving higher call volumes related to the weather.

According to the release, officials feel in the best interest of our community and our citizens, as well as the emergency workers, that they should ban any open burning of any kind in Macon County, which includes the cities of Lafayette and Red Boiling Springs. This ban will prohibit any open burning of any type until the conditions have changed such that the dangers of uncontrolled wild fires no longer exist.

This ban does not include the sale and use of fireworks during the fourth of July period but they strongly discourage the use of such devices unless precautions have been made to hamper the start or spread of an uncontrolled fire.

Citations for reckless endangerment will be issued to any person found to be in contempt of this order. This ban is to begin immediately and shall remain in effect until conditions warrants its' removal.

“The City of Lafayette’s water supplies are good right now,” commented Chief Scruggs, “but with these critically dry conditions, this could turn worse and we will be keeping an eye on everything to make sure that everyone has water.”

Chief Scruggs advises people to take precautions with their pets and outdoor animals, making sure they have plenty of water. Scruggs also says to keep an eye on the very young and elderly.

Added City Mayor Richard Driver, “We are advising everyone to please be careful and we appreciate the public’s support and understanding during these extremely dangerous dry conditions.”