



Alabama Department of Environmental Management
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Information Regarding St. Clair County Fire Near Moody (12/22/2022)

A smoldering fire at a property in St. Clair County near Moody continues to create considerable smoke. The fire is at a site where vegetative matter (leaves, limbs, trees, shrubs and similar materials) has been disposed of for a number of years. The smoke is similar to that associated with a forest fire.

In response to the fire, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management is working with firefighting professionals including the Moody Fire Department and the Alabama Forestry Commission, as well as other responders such as the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and the St. Clair County Emergency Management Agency. The Moody Fire Department is currently acting as the lead responder and providing regular updates on its Facebook page.

The following is relevant information ADEM wants the public to know:

- First and foremost, protecting human health and safety is the most important consideration for ADEM and the other agencies involved.
- Extinguishing the fire, which is the cause of the smoke, is critical.
- However, the fire will be difficult to extinguish due to underground burning and poses serious safety hazards for workers and responding personnel. The Moody Fire Department and the Alabama Forestry Commission have indicated the fire may burn for an extended period.
- The site was being used for the disposal of vegetative matter (leaves, limbs, trees, shrubs and similar materials). That use is not a regulated activity (like the disposal of household wastes) and is not subject to regulatory oversight.
- It appears that unauthorized solid waste (i.e. non-vegetative) was removed from the site following an ADEM enforcement action prior to the fire.
- The Moody Fire Department plans to maintain a presence at the site until the fire no longer poses a threat of spreading to adjoining properties.
- ADEM will continue to coordinate with the local and state authorities as long as necessary and will take appropriate enforcement action in the future.

To avoid or limit possible effects from the smoke, residents may consider taking the following steps:

- Limit outdoor activities.
- Install high-efficiency filters in heating and air conditioning systems.
- Seal areas where outside air may enter the home with caulking or other material (this will also pay dividends after the fire is extinguished).
- Consider obtaining a personal air quality monitor and adjust your activities to limit exposure to poor air quality. (<https://www.epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox>)
- Because the smoke may continue for an extended period, those with breathing-related health conditions may consider temporarily relocating.
- Contact health officials or a personal physician for other smoke-related health information.

