



# The Fire Wire

Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Service

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**Pierson Recieves Pioneer of the Year Award**

Story on page 6



## The Fire Wire

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### ABOUT THE COVER

Cherokee County's Paramedic Program Director, Randy Pierson, receives EMS Pioneer of the Year award.

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# EMS Chief Appointed to Advisory Board



*Nate Sullivan was recently appointed to the Georgia Coordinating Center Advisory Board.*

Cherokee County EMS Chief, Nate Sullivan, was recently appointed to the Georgia Coordinating Center Advisory Board (GCCAB).

The Georgia Coordinating Center, or GCC, (formerly known as the Regional Coordinating Center) was established in 2019 following the flooding at Grady Memorial Hospital. The GCC is responsible for coordinating the use of emergency rooms by ground ambulance services for patients being transported from the scene of an emergency to emergency departments in the 13-county metropolitan Atlanta area.

The purpose of the GCC is to provide increased situational awareness for EMS crews who are transporting patients regarding current hospital capacity and diversion/saturation status so that the crew can make an informed decision regarding the transport of the patient based on EMS Agency protocols which should address the patient's requested destination and the patient's current condition.

Sullivan was notified of the position last month and will attend his first meeting with the GCCAB later in July. Sullivan was named the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Chief for Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services in 2020, filling the position when Danny West retired in December of 2019.

Congratulations Nate!

# Fire Recruits Participate in Structural Fire Control Class

Cherokee County Fire Recruit Class 2021-01 were not only braving the outdoor heat, as they participated in the Georgia Fire Academy's "Structural Fire Control" Class back in July.

This course (2 day-16 hour) is designed to give firefighters the basic knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to control and extinguish structural fires. Students participated in firefighting drills at all stages of fire progress and learned to recognize the various fire conditions and dangers associated with interior structural firefighting. Practical drills included a live fire demonstration of fire behavior, single room drills, and multiple room drills. The course is based upon performance objectives and students must complete all objectives to receive credit for the course.



*Fire recruits get prepared to enter burn building.*

"We are fortunate here in Cherokee County to have a large group of very talented State Instructors who assist our Training Division in delivering this class", stated Fire Training Officer Lt. Robbie Kennedy, "For this particular class, we also had attendees and Instructors from Pickens County Fire and Alpharetta Fire," added Kennedy.

The class was held at the Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services Training Center.



*PHOTO AT LEFT - Cherokee County Fire Recruits are given instructions prior to entering the burn building.*



# Changes for Georgians Who Burn Outdoor Debris

## GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION



Changes are coming to laws affecting Georgians who burn outdoor yard debris. As of July 1st, of this year, landowners will no longer be required to notify the Georgia Forestry Commission of their intention to burn hand-piled vegetative matter. However, the legal responsibilities of those burning outdoor yard debris will be strengthened.

Under Senate Bill 119, GA code section 12-6-90 was changed to eliminate the notification requirement to burn hand-piled natural debris. Agriculture, silviculture and land-clearing burns for residential or commercial development will continue to require notification to the county forest ranger and a permit IS still required for these activities.

“Escaped debris burning is the number one cause of wildfire in Georgia,” said Georgia Forestry Commission Director Tim Lowrimore. “The Georgia Forestry Commission responds to more than 3,500 wildfires a year. With a strong focus on individual burning safety as required with these new changes, we can bring that number down significantly, together.”

The Georgia Forestry Commission has launched a communication campaign emphasizing the new changes that must be taken before burning: adequate space between fire and woodlands/structures; sunrise to sunset time frame; person on site responsible until fire is extinguished; and reasonable precautions to prevent escaped fire. As always, household garbage and man-made waste products may not be burned and it is unlawful to move debris from one location to another for the purpose of burning.

Local burning ordinances supersede the code requirements. In addition, restrictions on burning in 54 northern Georgia counties under the Environmental Protection Division summer burn ban from May 1-September 30 continue to be in effect.

Burning of debris generated by machine clearing of an area for the purpose of establishing a small garden spot or land clearing is considered a land type change. These are subject to the EPD land clearing burning rules and may require the use of an Air Curtain Destructor (ACD), depending on the county in which you live. To clear land with or without an ACD, or burn off acreage or understory, please contact your local GFC county office.

For more information go to [Ga-Trees.org](http://Ga-Trees.org).



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# GEORGIA'S OUTDOOR BURN NOTIFICATION SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

## CHANGES TO GEORGIA'S OUTDOOR BURN NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (SENATE BILL 119 – O.C.G.A. 12-6-90) - EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021

### *How has the burn notification law changed?*

GA code section 12-6-90 eliminates the need to notify the Georgia Forestry Commission when a person, firm, corporation or association intends to burn hand-piled vegetation/yard debris. Important fire prevention precautions for burners, however, were added.

### *If I don't have to call for permission, can I simply light the match?*

NO! The new law mandates the person burning take full responsibility for keeping their fire contained and is required to ensure FIVE SAFETY STANDARDS are followed.

Before you burn...**TAKE 5!**



### *What are the five safety standards and how will I remember them?*

Before you burn, "Take Five," and remember the acronym, "S-S-T-A-R." Each of the star's five points represents a burning safety standard:

- S Space** – Burn location must be no less than 25 feet from any woodlands, forestland or field that contains brush, grass or other flammable material.
- S Space** – Burn location must be no less than 50 feet from structures, which includes homes, outbuildings, sheds and barns.
- T Time** – Burning must take place between sunrise and sunset.
- A Attendance** – Person responsible must attend burning at all times until fire is completely extinguished and there is no risk for burning to escape control.
- R Reasonable Precautions** – Person responsible must take reasonable and necessary precautions to prevent fire escape or spread from the original location.

### *What constitutes "reasonable precautions?"*

Some examples include:

- Continuous pressurized water source on site, such as water hose. Buckets of water or hand-held sprayers do not meet legal requirements.
- Man-made or natural barrier to contain your fire such as bare soil, rocks, bricks or burn barrel.
- Hand tools or fire-containing equipment on site, such as rake, shovel, garden hoe, etc.
- Weather awareness to NWS red flag warnings, High Fire Danger designation of Class 4 or Class 5 days and other hazardous conditions, such as prolonged drought, low relative humidity or high winds, etc.



# Pierson Receives the Dr. James Creel EMS Pioneer of the Year Award

The Northwest Georgia/Region 1 EMS Awards Banquet was held on Thursday, June 10th, at the Cherokee County Conference Center at Northside Cherokee Hospital Conference Center on the Bluffs Parkway in Canton, Georgia. This year the host hospital was Northside Cherokee, and the host EMS agency was Cherokee County Fire and Emergency Services.

This annual awards banquet recognizes EMS providers that have shown exceptional patient care, leadership and significant contributions to the EMS profession in NW Georgia over the last year, or during their career.

Randy Pierson, Cherokee County's Paramedic Program Director, was this year's recipient of the Dr. James Creel EMS Pioneer of the Year Award. Dr. Creel was named as the first Regional Medical Director of EMS for Region 1. Dr. Creel had already established a smaller version of a regional EMS system in the Dade, Walker and Catoosa County area in the 1970s and with his appointment the boundaries of his region were extended to 16 counties. He worked to establish a better relationship between physicians and EMS personnel through the establishment of medical control and joint training courses. This award honors a person who has been instrumental in the development of the region's EMS system and has served multiple roles throughout their career for the betterment of our profession. The recipient of this award is selected by an average of the scores of 3 independent judges.



*Randy Pierson, Cherokee County's Paramedic Program Director, works hard daily to provide our county with the best help needed during an emergency situation.*



Randy came to work for the department on August 30th 2015. He was responsible for getting the "Initial Accreditation" to the Emergency Medical Services-Paramedic Training Program at Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Program in March of 2019. The CAAHEP Programs is the largest programmatic accreditor of the health sciences professions. In collaboration with its Committees on Accreditation, CAAHEP reviews and accredits over 2100 individual education programs in 30 health science occupations. CAAHEP accredited programs are assessed on an ongoing basis to assure that they meet the Standards and Guidelines of each profession.

Congratulations to Randy Pierson for receiving this honor at the awards banquet.

# Johnson Honored as Distinguished First Responder of the Year

Isaiah Johnson, a paramedic with Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services, was recently honored by Northside Cherokee as the Distinguished First Responder of the Year.

The award was presented to Johnson on May 21st during National EMS Week which honors the contributions of those who work on the medical front line. This year, it was celebrated from May 16 to May 23. The week gives Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and those who would like to credit them, a chance to recognize their hard work in potentially fatal situations daily.

According to EMS Chief, Nate Sullivan, "To me, it's extra special to be acknowledged for your work by your peers." Northside Cherokee Hospital honored Isaiah at an outdoor event on the ambulance ramp at the hospital.

The plaque will be placed in the EMS lounge at Northside Cherokee Hospital. Congratulations to Isaiah Johnson for being recognized by his peers and for receiving this distinguished award.



*Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services Paramedic Isaiah Johnson was recently recognized as the Distinguished First Responder of the Year by Northside Cherokee Hospital. From left, Johnson's nieces Anna and Nariah, Johnson's father Frank Johnson, Northside Cherokee Hospital Manager of Emergency Services Sara Putzer, Johnathan Gottfried and EMS Chief Nate Sullivan.*

## Church Supports Public Safety



Members of Hickory Flat Fellowship Church honored local public safety officials by providing them with lunch and dinner on Saturday, July 24th, at the church.

Firefighters, Sheriff's deputies and their families could enjoy a taco bar from 11AM til 2PM or dinner from 6PM til 9:00PM. Rhonda Moore, who heads up the event said that the church also provided goodie bags, gifts and several raffles for the attendees.

The church does the event annually to celebrate everything that public safety does for the community. Our sincere thanks to the members of Hickory Flat Fellowship Church for doing this event each year.



# Firefighters Train With Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team



*Cherokee County Firefighters trained with a Civil Support Team from Dobbins Air Force Base last June.*

Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services trained with the 4th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team out of Dobbins Air Force Base in Marietta on June 25th at the fire department's training center in Holly Springs.

The Civil Support Team is made up of 22 specially trained Georgia Army and Air National Guardsman. The 4th WMD-CST is manned by chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) specialists, medical specialist, analytical specialists, communication specialists, administrative specialists and logistical specialists.

According to Special Operations Chief, Darrell Mitchell, "The Cherokee County Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat) team worked with the

Civil Support Team that responds to Haz-Maz incidences and terrorist events. The team set up 3 different scenarios at the training center including a radiological incident inside a car, a biological incident inside a building and a chem-bio incident inside a building. The fire department would respond to these incidents first to rescue people who were inside the building and taken them to area hospitals, followed by the Civil Support Team who would collect evidence to make sure the area was safe."

Mitchell also stated that this was the third or fourth time that the fire department has worked with this team at this level. "The training was effective in a lot of ways because it allowed our firefighters to take an observation role by following everyone around to get the whole picture of what was being done," added Mitchell.

*PHOTO AT RIGHT - A decontamination area was set up during the exercise.*

