

Administration

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County Fire Rescue sends 1 engines, 4 firefighters to Panhandle to battle wildfires

May 7, 2020 – Flagler County Fire Rescue made arrangements to send one of its engines and four firefighters to the Panhandle to battle wildfires.

“I coordinated two strike teams for deployment comprised of 10 engines and 44 firefighters from five counties, including ours, and Jacksonville,” said Fire Chief Don Petito. “There are 11 fires in the region – two large fires that destroyed homes. Engine 16 deployed directly from the station last night around 9 p.m.”

Flagler County firefighters Dave Hudson, Sean Walker, Alex Patton, and David Dufek deployed as part of one of the strike teams. The crews will work a three-day mission.

Petito reported that the Musette Bayou Fire in South Walton County grew to over 600 acres and burned 100 structures, including 30 homes. The 5-mile Swamp Fire in Santa Rosa County started out as a 250-acre fire that quickly grew to more than 2000 acres, and burned 18 structures.

“It will be interesting to see how the command post, evacuation centers, and crews working the fire line will be able to practice social distancing while concentrating on their tasks,” Petito said.

There are 52 active wildfires in the state. The Keetch-Byram Drought Index in Flagler County is 360 on a scale where the driest condition is 800.

“We are in pretty good shape here,” Petito said. “Humidity is low today and the winds are high, but that is changing for the weekend. I spoke to Anthony Pettalatt, the Bunnell District Manager for the Florida Forest Service and part of the incident management team for the 5-mile Swamp Fire, and he said there is only one small fire in our district in Volusia County.”

All residents and businesses are reminded to abide by Executive and Emergency Orders, and follow Florida Department of Health and CDC guidance.

Charles Erickson, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Joe Mullins
District 4

Donald O'Brien, Jr.
District 5

Additionally, those who are sick and/or told to self-isolate are to: remain at home unless seeking medical care, cover coughs and sneezes, wear a facemask around others, and disinfect touched surfaces daily.

COVID-19 testing is available for Flagler County residents at a variety of locations, please visit www.FlaglerCounty.org, and following the links for COVID-19 and then select Screening & Testing for the latest options.

COVID-19 health related questions or concerns should be directed to your regular healthcare provider or the Florida Health hotline at 866-779-6121.

COVID-19 business concerns should be directed to the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation at 866-532-1440.

All other COVID-19 government services questions or concerns may be directed to a specific municipality or the Emergency Operations Center at 386-313-4200.

Check for current information on Flagler County's website www.flaglercounty.org, and follow "Flagler County Government" or "Flagler County Emergency Management" on Social Media. The county's social media team will provide updates through these official accounts:

Flagler County Government

- [Facebook.com/FlaglerCountyGovernment](https://www.facebook.com/FlaglerCountyGovernment)

Flagler County Emergency Management

- [Facebook.com/FlaglerEOC](https://www.facebook.com/FlaglerEOC)
- [Twitter.com/FlaglerEOC](https://twitter.com/FlaglerEOC)
- [Instagram.com/FlaglerEOC](https://www.instagram.com/FlaglerEOC)

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