



June 5, 2015

To: Georgia County Commission Chairs

CC: County Attorneys

**RE: O.C.G.A. 12-6-24 – Notice of Timber Harvesting Operations**

The Georgia Forestry Association (GFA) frequently finds that Georgia's timber harvest notification law is interpreted and implemented differently from county to county. Naturally, a business that operates in multiple counties and whose vehicles often must move from county to county on short notice can find it challenging to comply with varying interpretations and requirements.

In an effort to resolve some of the uncertainty and administrative burden caused by different logging ordinances among various counties, GFA supported amendments to the timber harvest notification statutes in the 2015 legislative session to provide greater uniformity in the enforcement of the law. A copy of House Bill 199 is enclosed for your convenience.

House Bill 199, effective July 1, 2015, amends O.C.G.A. 12-6-24 as follows:

- Requires that the notification form required by a county's timber harvest ordinance be the 'exact' form approved by the Georgia Forestry Commission Director and limited to only the information required by the statute (form enclosed).
- Adds electronic mail as an approved means of providing notification to the county.
- Requires the harvester to provide only one bond per year per county regardless of the number of tracts harvested in that county.
- Specifically prohibits a county from requiring an administrative fee or any other fee for the purpose of receiving a notification of a timber harvest.

We expect that these amendments, when applied consistently to all logging ordinances, will go a long way toward resolving confusion and conflict between loggers and local governments. Please review your county's logging ordinance to insure that these changes are incorporated into the ordinance and reflected in its administration. If your county does not have a logging ordinance, please be sure these provisions are included when and if the county determines that an ordinance should be adopted.

Thank you for your attention to this change in Georgia's timber harvest notification law.

Sincerely,

Steve McWilliams  
President