



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION BUREAU MANUAL
VEGETATION MANAGMENT
435.3 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT – WUI AREAS
EFFECTIVE: APRIL 1, 2016
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SCOPE

Vegetation management landscape plans for Wildland Urban Interface areas

PURPOSE

This policy has been established to clarify vegetation management landscape plans for the Wildland Urban Interface

DEFINITIONS

Wildland Urban Interface – TFPD: the WUI area in TFPD is defined in standard 433.1

REQUIREMENTS

1. The Vegetation Management Plan referred to hereinafter as the VMP shall be submitted to the Fire Official for review prior to implementation. The VMP shall be submitted in two forms;
 - a) Two (2) sets of scaled black line drawings showing the structure, plant type and spacing within 100 feet of the structure or to property line. Landscape plans only, will be rejected unless they include a specific outline of the information required by this Standard.
 - b) Text describing results of the fire-hazard assessment (slope and aspect), proposed long-term maintenance schedule and the list of plants to be used.
2. Within 100 feet of all structures defensible space must be maintained. “Defensible space” means the area 100 feet, or to the property line, around a structure that the owner maintains to reduce the potential for transfer of fire between the structure and the adjacent vegetation, the adjacent vegetation and the structure, or from structure to structure.

a) Within the first 10 feet:

- 1) No pyrophytic plants within 10 ft. of the house.
- 2) Trim tree limbs to a minimum of 10 feet away from the outlet of chimneys for 360 degrees.
- 3) Maintain the roof and deck area of any structure on the property free of leaves, needles, or dead vegetative growth.
- 4) Remove or cut all combustible vegetation such as, dead trees, and all dead vegetation.
- 5) Remove all flammable materials from your deck.
- 6) Keep gutters clear of combustible material.
- 7) Regardless of plant selection, shrubs should be spaced so that no continuity exists between the ground fuels and tree crowns.
- 8) Individual existing non-pyrophytic trees may be allowed to remain on a case-by-case basis if proper crown separation can be maintained.

b) Within 11-50 feet:

- 1) Remove dead and dying grass, shrubs, and trees.
- 2) Reduce the density of vegetation and ladder fuels.
- 3) Cut grasses to 3 inches in height above the ground.
- 4) Clumps of shrubs, called islands, must be separated by a distance of no less than two times the height of the shrubs.
- 5) Individual trees or small clumps of trees of non-pyrophytic species shall have a minimum crown separation of 20 feet.
- 6) Individual pyrophytic trees shall have a minimum crown separation of twice their height.
- 7) Remove or chip all cut vegetation.
- 8) Replace hazardous vegetation with fire-resistive, irrigated landscape vegetation including lawn, or other low growing groundcovers and flowering plants.

c) Within 51-100 feet:

- 1) Trim the limbs that are 3 inches or less in diameter 6 feet from the ground on trees that exceed 18 feet in height.
- 2) Remove dead and dying material.
- 3) Cut grasses to 3 inches in height above ground.
- 4) Give individual trees or shrubs, and islands of trees or shrubs 10 feet of separation.

4. Adjacent to Roadways:

- a) Trim and maintain vegetation to within 10 feet of roadways as required for defensible space.
- b) Trim trees so they do not hang lower than 13'6" above the roadway.

5. Slope Influence on Minimum Defensible Space Clearances:

Increasing slopes require increased defensible space clearances to be equally effective. For example, to be equally effective upslope, cross slope, and down slope clearances, around each structure must be increased as percentage of slope increases when compared to level terrain.

Rate of spread, flame length, convective and radiant heat, increase in relation to fuel type, aspect, and percentage of slope factors. Increased defensible space zone radiuses in relation to slope are required around structures through fuel modification and reduction.

Note increased upslope and cross slope defensible space clearance requirements may increase due to increases in slope. Specific terrain may require adjustment.

6. Fire Safety Practices:

- a) Do not store combustible vegetation except as agreed upon for pickup.
- b) Ensure mowers, saws and yard maintenance equipment are equipped with a spark arrestor.
- c) When using mowers or metal cutting blades, pre-check the area for rocks or metal to avoid the blades making sparks.
- d) Ensure effective spark arrestors are fitted on chimneys.

e) Wood roofs in any location are susceptible to falling fire brands which can result in the loss of the structure and the spread to adjacent buildings and vegetation. Consider changing wood roofs to a non-combustible roof.

f) Coordinate vegetation management efforts with your neighborhood association to reduce your cost for chipping and hauling.

g) Chipped wood and mulch can provide an excellent thermal barrier, which will help prevent, lost moisture in ground fuels. However, shredded bark, sometimes referred to as “monkey hair” is prohibited from use because of its high flammability and fire spread characteristics.

7. Pyrophytic Plants are plants that ignite more readily and burn more intensely than others. Some characteristics that pyrophytic plants share are: a high surface area to volume ratio, a low moisture content, and a high percentage of dead matter or debris. **Plants that have a favorable fire performance rating may have an unfavorable fire performance if proper maintenance of landscaping is not maintained. Proper maintenance of landscaping is crucial to keeping a plant from becoming pyrophytic.** The following list is a partial list of pyrophytic plants, plants that have an unfavorable fire performance rating:

Latin name	Common name
<i>Abies spp.</i>	Fir trees
<i>Adenostoma fasciculatum</i>	Chamise, Greasewood
<i>Adenostoma sparsifolium</i>	Redshank
<i>Arctostaphylos spp.</i>	Manzanitas
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	Sagebrush
<i>Baccharis spp.</i>	Coyote brush
<i>Bambusa spp.</i>	Bamboo
<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	Jubata grass
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	Pampas grass
<i>Cupressus spp.</i>	Cypress species
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Scotch broom
<i>Eucalyptus spp.</i>	Eucalyptus species
<i>Genista monspessulanus</i>	French broom
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common juniper
<i>Juniperus flaccida</i>	Weeping juniper
<i>Pennisetum spp.</i>	Fountaingrasses
<i>Picea spp.</i>	Spruces
<i>Pinus attenuata</i>	Knobcone pine
<i>Pinus coulteri</i>	Coulter pine
<i>Pinus muricata</i>	Bishop pine

<i>Pinus radiata</i>	Monterey pine
<i>Pinus sabiniana</i>	Gray pine
<i>Pinus serotina</i>	Pond pine
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots pine
<i>Pinus torreyana</i>	Torrey pine
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish broom
<i>Thuja spp.</i>	Arborvitae
<i>Tsuga spp.</i>	Hemlock
<i>Ulex europea</i>	Gorse

PROCEDURES

Vegetation Management Plans shall be submitted during the planning development phase. Required and voluntary plans shall be approved by the Fire District.

CROSS REFERENCES

California Fire Code