



COUNTY OF LAKE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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WEED AND BRUSH CLEARING

Each year from May 15 to November 1 there is an increased fire danger in Lake County and over Northern California. Excessive weeds and brush can be a threat to people, structures, and animals. The County of Lake Community Development Department, local Fire Departments, and community groups provide information to educate the public about responsibilities to keep properties safe and in compliance with Lake County Codes.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has declared weeds and rubbish to be a public nuisance. If you own, lease, or have control of any real property within Lake County that property must have a thirty foot firebreak around those structures. If your neighbor has excessive weeds, complaints should be phoned to your local Fire District or the Community Development Department. A site visit is made to the property and once confirmed, notification is mailed. If weeds are not removed, or there are properties with continuing weed problems, the weeds will be cut and charges made to the property owner. It is important that owners act promptly to inspect and determine if their property is in compliance. (The specific County Code Section applicable to abatement of weeds and brush can be found at the back of this flyer.)

The following guidelines are ways to keep your residence and structures Fire Safe:

- Trim trees and shrubs away from buildings and chimneys;
- Remove dead leaves, branches and needles from roofs and rain gutters;
- Keep your property free of combustibles, such as dried vegetation and prunings;
- Keep access roads and driveways trimmed to allow for Fire Department access;
- Make sure your address is clearly visible from the roadway.
- Additional helpful information may be found at: <http://www.southlakefiresafecouncil.org/> and Fire Safe Landscaping : <http://www.firesafecouncil.org/education/landscaping/>



WEED ABATEMENT RECOMENDATIONS

1. Any person that owns, leases, or controls any real property that has structures shall maintain a firebreak that is within thirty feet of all structures on said real property.
2. All parcels which are less than 5 acres in size must have all combustible growth in excess of 4 in height cut and removed or disked.
3. Vines within 20 feet of any combustible building or fence shall be cut and removed.

4. Disking is the preferred method of abatement by many property owners. In general, cutting will often not maintain the property in a satisfactory manner for the remainder of the dry season, requiring the property owner to cut the property multiple times during the dry season.
5. Regardless of the abatement method used by the property owner, all properties will be subject to inspections throughout the dry season, as well as notification and abatement proceedings if the property is not maintained in compliance with County requirements. Properties must be maintained throughout the entire dry season.
6. Rubbish left, deposited or abandoned on property must be removed. Any dead vegetation and prunings must also be removed.
7. Sidewalks, planter strips, alleys and ditches adjacent to a parcel are the responsibility of the property owner, and must be maintained by the property owner to be in compliance.
8. To abate any parcel which is 5 acres or larger in size, firebreaks may be considered as an alternative to clearing the entire parcel. All combustible growth must be cut and removed from within a minimum of 30 feet from all structures and all access roads on the property. All combustible growth must also be removed from any sidewalks, planter strips, alleys or ditches which are adjacent to the parcel. Additional 30 foot wide cross cut firebreaks must be constructed throughout the remainder of the parcel in order to divide the remaining combustible material into separate sections, no more than 2.5 acres in size.
9. Any hillside or otherwise steep property with natural obstructions or terrain features which prohibit the safe use of disking equipment must still be abated, often requiring handwork. If the conditions of the property are such as to also prohibit safe handwork, the use of an approved fire trail or firebreak may be acceptable. Develop a plan of what to do in the event of a fire on or near your property. This plan should include a predetermined meeting place safely away from the property for family members to gather, and for different available routes of travel from the property.

Lake County Code: Chapter 5 Article I Sec.5-6E.2

(c) Brush and Grass Clearance Around Structures.

(i) Any person that owns, leases, or controls any real property that is within thirty (30) feet of any structure shall maintain on all said real property a firebreak, within thirty (30) feet of said structure which shall be constructed by removing and clearing away all brush and grass. This section does not apply to single specimens of trees, ornamental shrubbery, or similar plants which are used as ground cover, if they do not form a means of rapidly transmitting fire from the native growth to any building or structure.

(ii) Any person that owns, leases, or controls any real property that is located from thirty (30) feet to one located from thirty feet to one hundred (100) feet of said structure a firebreak constructed by removing and clearing away all brush and grass, if the chief determines that extra hazardous conditions requires a firebreak of more than thirty (30) feet from said structure to provide reasonable fire safety. Grass and other vegetation located more than thirty (30) feet from such building or structure and less than eighteen (18) inches in height above the ground may be maintained where necessary to stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.