



COUNTY OF MARIN
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
3501 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 415, SAN RAFAEL, CA 94903
415/499-6387 - FAX 415/499-3795

May 9, 2009

Dear Marin County Open Space District Neighbor:

The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) together with the Marin County Fire Chiefs Association would like to remind you that it is time to make your home fire-safe. Throughout the year, the MCOSD and Marin County Fire perform a variety of tasks to reduce the possibility of fire on open space lands. The State's fire agency, Cal Fire (California Department of Forestry), requires that property owners create a low-fuel defensible space zone of 100 feet from habitable structures on their property. You can contribute substantially to supporting our efforts towards improving the fire safety of your own home, by creating defensible space.

In an effort to help property owners meet this requirement, the MCOSD allows the cutting of tall grasses on adjacent open space lands, within 100 feet of the property boundary, without a MCOSD permit. A MCOSD permit is required to cut or remove other types of vegetation. To request a permit to remove vegetation other than grass, or to ask any questions regarding the creation of defensible space, please contact the MCOSD field office at (415) 507-2816.

You can learn more about creating defensible space and find other valuable fire safety information at the following websites: www.marincountyfire.org, www.firesafemarin.org, and www.firewise.org.

As a neighbor, you may interested to know that the MCOSD is undertaking a comprehensive Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan, in conjunction with county and local fire agencies, to address the wide range of wildland fire fuel and resource management issues on open space lands. Community meetings regarding the development of this plan will be held later this year and details will be available on our website.

Thank you for your help and cooperation in keeping Marin fire safe.


Sharon McNamee, General Manager
Marin County Open Space District


Ken Massucco, Fire Chief
Marin County Fire Department

Encl.

**GUIDELINES FOR MOWING GRASS
ON MARIN COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT LANDS
ADJACENT TO PRIVATE PROPERTY**

To perform this work safely and responsibly, please follow the guidelines below:

- ❖ Confirm that the property you want to mow is owned by the Marin County Open Space District, not your neighbor or another agency. Information on lot lines and property ownership is available at the County Assessor-Recorder's Office (499-7215 or go to <http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/AR/main/index.cfm>) and the County Community Development Agency (499-6269 or go to <http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/index.cfm>).
- ❖ Mow only grass. If you wish to cut brush or trees on Open Space District lands, you need a permit; please call the District field office at 415-507-2816.
- ❖ Never mow under high fire hazard RED FLAG conditions; call 415-499-7191 for current conditions. In the heat of summer, mow early in the morning or during the evening when it is cooler and less likely that you could start a fire. Use extra caution with power mowers or other spark-producing tools.
- ❖ Keep a 5-pound "ABC" fire extinguisher AND a fully charged garden hose at the work site while mowing.
- ❖ Do not use metal mowing heads on weed whips, as they can spark from contact with rocks. Make sure spark arrestors are in place and functioning.
- ❖ Do not lay hot power tools in dry grass where hot metals may ignite flammable vegetation.
- ❖ Refuel tools away from vegetation – on paved surfaces or cleared areas. Store gasoline away from the work site.
- ❖ If possible, have someone keep a close watch while you are working. If possible, this person should carry a cell phone.
- ❖ Watch for hikers and other open space visitors; cease work until they are clear from the work area.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Information about the Open Space District is available on the internet at www.marinopenspace.org. For guidelines on fire protection, call your local fire agency or check the internet at www.firesafemarin.org.