

MODEL DSPACE INSPECTION GUIDE



CAL FIRE

Office of the State Fire Marshal
Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation Division
Wildfire Preparedness Program

2023 EDITION

Purpose:

(d) (1) The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall develop a model defensible space program that shall be made available for use by a city, county, or city and county in the enforcement of the defensible space provisions of Section 51182 of this code and subdivision (a) of Section 4291 of the Public Resources Code. In the development of this program, the State Fire Marshal shall consult with representatives from local, state, and federal fire services, local government, building officials, utility companies, the building industry, insurers and insurance research organizations, and the environmental community. Components of the program shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(A) General guidelines for creating and maintaining defensible space around specified structures, including appropriate guidelines and definitions for vegetation management.

(B) Suggested minimum qualifications needed for enforcement personnel.

(C) Enforcement mechanisms for compliance with and maintenance of defensible space requirements, including, but not limited to, the following:

(i) Site inspections.

(ii) Procedures for notifying a property owner of a violation.

(iii) Timelines for corrective action by a property owner and for reinspection.

(iv) Citations requiring abatement of a violation and subsequent removal of a fire hazard within the defensible space boundaries.

(v) Suggested administrative procedures that allow for the appeal of the citation by the property owner.

(2) If a defensible space program is adopted, the local agency for enforcement of this program may recover the actual cost of abatement and may cause a notice of abatement lien to be recorded in the county in which the real property is located. The notice shall, at a minimum, identify the record owner or possessor of the property, set forth the last known address of the record owner or possessor, set forth the date upon which abatement was ordered by the local agency and the date the abatement was completed, and include a description of the real property subject to the lien and the amount of the abatement cost.

(3) The model defensible space program required pursuant to this subdivision shall be updated whenever the department substantially updates the guidance documents created pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 51182 of this code and subdivision (e) of Section 4291 of the Public Resources Code.

(4) In order to develop and implement this subdivision and support any required update of the guidance documents identified in subdivision (c) of Section 51182 of this code and subdivision (e) of Section 4291 of the Public Resources Code, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is authorized to expend funds from the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, upon an appropriation by the Legislature, pursuant to Section 18931.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

Appendix A:

HAZARDOUS VEGETATION AND COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL ABATEMENT

Findings

- A. The City, County, or City and County City Council/Board of Supervisors supports improved defensible space for each parcel within the local agency's jurisdiction. This City Council/Board of Supervisors recognizes that abatement may be required of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials for a parcel on which a protected building or structure is located. This Article extends and supplements state law, utilizing the same treatment requirements as provided by Government Code 51182, to ensure defensible space is maintained on parcels adjacent to improved parcels and along emergency access and evacuation routes and fire access easements so that landowners benefit from defensible space on adjacent parcels where appropriate.
 1. The City, County, or City and County City Council/Board of Supervisors supports improved defensible space for each parcel within the local agency's jurisdiction. This City Council/Board of Supervisors recognizes that abatement may be required of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials beyond the property line of a parcel on which a protected building or structure is located or the potential impact that hazardous vegetation beyond a property line could have on an adjacent improved parcel. This Article extends and supplements state law, utilizing the same treatment requirements as provided by Government Code 51182, to ensure defensible space is maintained on parcels adjacent to improved parcels and along emergency access and evacuation routes and fire access easements so that landowners benefit from defensible space on adjacent parcels where appropriate.

The City, County, or City and County generally has a dry, arid climate conducive to wildfires year round or during climatologically documented periods. City, County, or City and County also has a very diverse and complex landscape, which includes dry, brush-covered, and grass-covered wildlands, mountainous areas, dense heavily forested properties, and other terrains which are home to many sensitive plant and animal species. Many of the City, County, or City and County's native and non-native plant species can be highly combustible during climatologically normal precipitation conditions, prone to dry periods, and have contributed to significant wildfires within the City, County, or City and County. Topography, terrain, and weather conditions exacerbate the fire danger and the difficulty of fighting wildfires and have resulted in catastrophic impacts to human life, property, and the environment. All vegetation will burn given the right conditions, and wildfire risk reduction has more to do with the arrangement and health of plants than with particular species.

- A. Of paramount importance to the City, County, or City and County Council/Board of Supervisors and the citizens of City, County, or City and County are the protection of lives and structures from the threat of wildfire, and the safety of public safety personnel during wildfires. The proper establishment

of maintained and enforced defensible space, benefits property owners, public safety personnel, and all citizens of City, County, or City and County by dramatically increasing the likelihood that structures will survive a wildfire, provides for firefighter safety during a wildfire, and aids in the protection of lives, property, and the environment.

- B. The City, County, or City and County Council/Board of Supervisors finds and declares that the growth and/or accumulation of weeds, grasses, hazardous vegetation, and combustible materials or obstructions on sidewalks, streets, and on lands or lots within the City, County, or City and County is dangerous or injurious to a neighboring property and the health, safety, and welfare of residents of the City, County, or City and County. Such growth and accumulation constitute a public nuisance in that it creates fire hazards, and creates a hazard to the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.
- C. The purpose of this Article is to provide for the removal of hazardous vegetation and combustible material from around the exterior of improvements situated in the jurisdiction of the City, County, or City and County to reduce the potential for fire and to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the community. It is the further purpose of this Article to establish a hazardous vegetation reduction program that provides a process to identify and abate hazardous vegetation on parcels and protects the lives and property of the citizens of City, County, or City and County, while at the same time protecting sensitive plant and animal species and protecting against significant erosion and sedimentation. The removal of hazardous vegetation in the areas subject to this Article is recognized as an essential action homeowners and property owners can take to increase the chances that homes, structures, and other property will survive a wildfire, while protecting the natural environment. Regular fuel management and modifications consistent with the requirements of this Article are necessary to ensure adequate defensible space is achieved. The defensible space required by this Article is necessary to significantly reduce the risk of transmission of flame or heat sufficient to ignite the structures, and there is no other feasible mitigation measure possible to reduce the risk of ignition or spread of wildfire to structures on adjacent improved parcels.
- D. This Article is enacted by ordinance pursuant to the powers granted to the City Council/Board of Supervisors concerning the abatement of hazardous vegetation and combustible material as contained in *applicable governing codes and regulations of the State of California*. Additional authority for the abatement of nuisances, establishment of procedures, and establishment of real property liens through the City Council/Board of Supervisors is provided in *applicable governing codes and regulations of the State of California*.

Application of Article

This Article shall apply to:

- A. This Article shall, at all times of year, be applicable to all Improved Parcels within the jurisdiction of the City, County, or City and County.
- B. All Parcels adjacent to Improved Parcels where: (a) the owner/occupant of the Improved Parcel is unable to obtain the required Defensible Space, as delineated in adopted City, County, or City and County Codes; and (b) the current condition of fuels on the subject Parcel is assessed by the Public Official as a hazardous fire condition regardless of fire hazard severity zone. The owner of the subject Parcel shall provide or allow for the fuel modifications to meet the Defensible Space requirements of the adjacent Improved Parcel subject to applicable law including the finding that the clearing is necessary to significantly reduce the risk of transmission of flame or heat sufficient to ignite a Structure, and there is no other feasible mitigation measure possible to reduce the risk of ignition or spread of wildfire to the Structure.
- C. All Parcels where:
 - 1. The parcel is adjacent to a roadway which is determined by the Public Official to be necessary for the safe ingress and egress to the area served by the roadway or fire access easement; and
 - 2. The current condition of fuels on the adjacent Parcel is assessed by the Public Official as a hazardous fire condition.
- D. The owner, occupant or other person in control of the improved parcel shall be responsible for fifty (50) percent of the abatement cost on the adjacent parcel if the owner of said adjacent parcel consents in writing to the abatement.
- E. If any part of this Article is in conflict with any other part of this code the more restrictive provision(s) shall control.

Definitions

As used in this Article, the following definitions shall apply:

“Abate” or “Abatement” shall mean an act used to remove, destroy, eliminate, seize, impound, or any action taken to mitigate a public nuisance.

“Abatement costs” shall mean any and all costs incurred by the City, County, or City and County or a local independent fire district to enforce this Article and to abate the hazardous vegetation or combustible material on any property pursuant to this Article, including physical abatement costs, administration fees and any additional actual costs incurred for the abatement proceeding(s), including attorney’s fees, if applicable.

“Biomass” shall mean all green waste material generated during the fuel treatment project. Biomass includes, without limitation, all grass, weeds, vegetation, and tree trimmings.

“City Council/Council/Board of Supervisors” or “Board” shall mean the City Council/Board of Supervisors for the City, County, or City and County of _____.

“Citation” or “Administrative Citation” shall mean a civil citation issued pursuant to the Article stating there has been a violation of one or more provisions and setting the amount of the civil penalty to be paid by the responsible party.

“Combustible material” shall mean any material other than hazardous vegetation that is combustible, creates a fire hazard and/or endangers public safety.

“City, County, or City and County” shall mean the City, County, or City and County of _____, a political subdivision of the State of California.

“Days” shall mean calendar days.

“Defensible space” means that area described in 14 California Code of Regulations 1299, Government Code 51182, Public Resources Code Section 4291 and as otherwise described in this Code, which is adjacent to each exterior side of a building or Structure and must be cleared of brush, Hazardous Vegetation, or Combustible Material, as set forth in this Code.

“Fire hazard” shall mean any condition, arrangement, act, or omission which:

1. Increases, or may cause an increase of hazard or menace of fire to a greater degree than that customarily recognized as normal by persons in the public service regularly engaged in preventing, suppressing, or extinguishing fire; or
2. May obstruct, delay, hinder, or interfere with the operations of a fire department or the egress of occupants in the event of a fire.

“Hazardous vegetation” shall mean any vegetation that is combustible and endangers public safety by creating a fire hazard. Hazardous vegetation is those vegetative materials that will readily ignite, burn, and transmit fire to any Structure or other surrounding and/or adjacent vegetation. Hazardous vegetation includes, but is not limited to, dry grass and leaves, brush, weeds, green waste, dead or dying trees, low-hanging branches, litter, or other flammable vegetation. Hazardous

vegetation shall not include a commercial agricultural crop that is being actively grown and managed by the property owner or his or her legal tenant.

“Improved Parcel” shall mean a portion of real property on which a Structure is located, the area of which is determined by the Assessor’s maps and records, and which may be identified by an Assessor’s Parcel Number.

“Ladder fuels” shall mean any fuels that could carry fire vertically between or within Combustible Material or Hazardous Vegetation, including but not limited to a wood fence located within five (5) feet of any other Structure.

“Public Official” shall include the Fire Chief of any local fire department/protection district located in whole or in part within the City, County, or City and County, City, County, or City and County Fire Marshal, the company officers and trained prevention staff as may be designated by a Fire Chief to enforce the provisions of this Article, and City, County, or City and County Office of Emergency Services staff. Public Officials include City, County, or City and County Code Compliance officers.

“Parcel” shall mean a portion of real property of any size, the area of which is determined by the Assessor’s maps and records, and which may be identified by an Assessor’s Parcel Number.

“Real Estate Transaction” shall mean the transfer of real property between individuals or entities.

“Responsible Party” shall mean an individual, association, co-partnership, political subdivision, government agency, municipality, industry, public or private corporation, firm, organization, partnership, joint venture or any other person or entity whatsoever whose act or omission caused or contributed to a violation of this Article.

“Structure” shall mean any dwelling, house, building, or other types of construction, whether or not occupied which have a permanent roof structure and are supported by walls or posts that are secured to the ground.

“Unimproved parcel” shall mean a portion of land of any size, the area of which is determined by the Assessor’s maps and records and may be identified by an Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) upon which no Structure is located.

Nuisance Declared; Duty to Abate Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material

- A. Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Materials within one hundred (100') feet of a Structure (or greater as determined by the Public Official) on properties located within City, County, or City and County, are hereby declared to be a public nuisance that may be abated in accordance with this Article, and by any other means available by law.
- B. Prior to the close of any Real Estate Transaction subject to Civil Code section 1102.19 within the County, the seller of any real residential property must obtain documentation from an Inspection Official that the property is in compliance with this section and provide that documentation to the buyer at or before the close of escrow. If documentation of compliance is not available at the time of sale, the buyer shall obtain documentation from an Inspection Official stating the property is in compliance with this section within 90 days after the close of escrow, unless otherwise approved by the enforcement official.
 1. Documentation of compliance with these requirements shall be provided to the buyer prior to the close of escrow.
 2. If documentation cannot be obtained prior to the close of escrow, the seller and buyer may enter into a written agreement whereby the buyer agrees to obtain documentation of compliance with these requirements within one year of the date of close of escrow.
 3. Documentation of compliance obtained in the six-month period preceding the date of the close of escrow is sufficient to satisfy this section.
- C. It shall be the duty of every person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a dwelling or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material, to abate therefrom, and from roadways on or immediately adjacent thereto (except for those roads accepted into the City, County, or City and County maintained system), all Combustible Material, and Hazardous Vegetation which constitutes a fire hazard and public nuisance.
- D. The requirements of this Section shall be satisfied if the Parcel and all roadways on or immediately adjacent thereto (except for those roads accepted into the City, County, or City and County maintained system) are cleared in accordance with a Notice to Abate by cutting brush, trimming trees, thinning trees, disking, mowing, plowing, or any other method described in a Notice to Abate, or, if no Notice to Abate is issued, by removing all Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Materials as follows:
 1. Maintain a Defensible Space of one hundred (100') feet from each exterior side and from the front and rear of a Structure, but not beyond the property line except as provided in subparagraph (B) of Section 51182 of the Government Code. The amount of fuel modification necessary shall consider the flammability of the Structure as affected by building material, building standards, location, and type of vegetation. Fuels shall be maintained in a condition so that a wildfire would be less

likely to ignite the Structure. This subparagraph does not apply to single specimens of trees or other vegetation that are well-pruned and maintained to effectively manage fuels and not form a means of rapidly transmitting fire from other nearby vegetation to a Structure or from a Structure to other nearby vegetation. The intensity of fuels management may vary within the one hundred (100') foot perimeter of a Structure, the most intense being used between five (5') feet and thirty (30') feet around the Structure, and an ember-resistant zone being required within five (5') feet of the structure, including around attached decks. Consistent with fuels management objectives, steps should be taken to minimize erosion;

2. Maintain a one hundred (100') foot wide area of land around Structure(s) located on an adjacent Improved Parcel (some or all of this Defensible Space requirement may be required on an adjacent Parcel depending upon the location of the Structure on the Improved Parcel);
3. Maintain free of Ladder Fuels a minimum of a ten (10') foot wide strip of land beyond the shoulder of a roadway serving as primary ingress and egress to the parcel, to a height of six (6) feet along the boundary of a Parcel;

(a) Inspection Criteria for Zone 0

1. Remove fuels and items that could catch fire that are within the first five feet (5 ft.) of or above the "Structure".
2. Remove fuels and items that could catch fire that are adjacent to or under combustible decks, porches, balconies, stairs, or similar attached accessories.
3. No combustible bark or mulch is allowed in this zone. Consider using hardscape like gravel, flagstone, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete, or other noncombustible materials.
4. Ensure all live tree branches are kept a minimum of 10 feet above the roof and decking.
5. Ensure all live plants and branches are kept a minimum of 5 feet away from the sides of the structure and attached decking.
6. Ensure all branches are a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) away from chimney and stovepipe outlets.
7. All dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles have been removed from around the " Structure" including on the roof or rain gutters of the "Building or Structure" or any other location within the Zone.
8. Relocate exposed firewood piles outside of Zone 0.

Suggestions and Education in Zone 0:

- Use hardscape like gravel, flagstone, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete, or other noncombustible materials.
- Limit combustible items such as outdoor furniture, planters, and other combustible items on top of decks.
- Replace combustible fencing, gates, trellis, and arbors attached to the "Structure(s)" with noncombustible features.
- Relocate garbage and recycling containers outside of this zone unless in a secured, fire-resistant enclosure or covered with a secured, fire-resistant material.
- Relocate boats, RVs, vehicles, and other combustible items outside of this zone unless in a secured, fire-resistant enclosure or covered with a secured, fire-resistant material.

(b) Inspection Criteria for Zone 1:

1. All dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles have been removed from the Zone.
2. All exposed firewood piles are located outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely covered in a fire-resistant material.
3. No flammable vegetation and/or materials that could catch fire are located adjacent to or under combustible decks, balconies, and stairs.
4. Ensure horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees is maintained using the "Fuel Separation" method, the "Continuous Tree Canopy" method or a combination of both to achieve defensible space clearance requirements.
5. In both the Fuel Separation and Continuous Tree Canopy methods, the DSI will ensure the following standards apply:
 - a. All dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels have been removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of three inches (3 in.).
 - b. Annual grasses and forbs have been cut/trimmed down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).
 - c. Ensure all exposed wood piles have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, or use hardscape like gravel, flagstone, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete, or other noncombustible materials.

(c) Inspection Criteria for Zone 2:

1. Ensure horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees is maintained using the "Fuel Separation" method, the "Continuous Tree

Canopy" method, or a combination of both to achieve defensible space clearance requirements.

2. In both the Fuel Separation and Continuous Tree Canopy methods, the DSI will ensure the following standards apply:
 - a. All dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels have been removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of three inches (3 in.).
 - b. Annual grasses and forbs have been cut/trimmed down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).
 - c. Ensure all exposed wood piles have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

(d) Inspection Criteria for both Zones 1 and 2:

1. The Public Official will ensure Outbuildings and Liquid Propane Gas (LPG) storage tanks have the following minimum clearance:
 - a. ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance to bare mineral soil or use other noncombustible items such as gravel, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete.
 - b. No dead or dying vegetation for an additional ten feet (10 ft.) around their exterior.
 2. Provide educational information to the occupant or property owner at the time of inspection.
 - a. Advise the occupant or property owner to avoid the use of heavy equipment in and around streams and seasonal drainages, as this is important for protecting water quality. Vegetation removal can cause soil erosion, especially on steep slopes. Keep soil disturbance to a minimum on steep slopes.
 3. Climbing vines must be removed from trees and Structures within the one hundred (100') foot defensible space zone around Structure(s);
 4. Maintain the roof of a Structure free of leaves, needles, or any combustible debris;
 5. Maintain the Parcel free of ladder fuels within the one hundred (100') foot Defensible Space area around Structure(s);
 6. Further guidance regarding these methods is contained in the City, County, or City and County, "General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space, DATE UPDATED," incorporated herein by reference.
- E. The Public Official may mandate additional fuels management of an area more or less than the above-referenced widths or height on a Parcel and all sidewalks and roadways on or immediately adjacent thereto (except for those roads accepted into the City, County, or City and County maintained system), for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment if the Public Official finds that the additional fuels management is necessary to significantly reduce the risk of transmission of flame or heat sufficient to ignite

a Structure, and there is no other feasible mitigation measure possible to reduce the risk of ignition or spread of wildfire to a Structure on an Improved Parcel. The Public Official shall determine appropriate defensible space distances based upon a visual inspection of the Parcel and shall consider all factors that place the Structure(s) on the adjacent Improved Parcel at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include but are not limited to, local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the adjacent parcel or the Structure(s) is located.

- F. Clearance requirements around free-standing photovoltaic systems and equipment shall comply with the following:
 - 1. A minimum 10-foot clearance for clusters of panels not exceeding 1,500 sqft of the combined panel area.
 - 2. A minimum 30-foot clearance for clusters of panels greater than 1,500 sqft of the combined panel area.
 - 3. Clusters shall be separated a minimum of 20 feet, edge to edge.
- G. When a building is less than one hundred feet from a property line and Combustible Material or Hazardous Vegetation on an adjacent parcel presents a fire hazard for the building, the owner of the adjacent parcel where the fire hazard exists shall be responsible for clearing the area on their land which is within one hundred feet of the occupied Structure and is needed to provide the necessary fire protection in the manner and to the extent required by the Public Official.
- H. Where the terrain, condition, or environment on the adjacent Parcel is such that it cannot or should not be disked or mowed, the Public Official may require, or authorize, other means of hazardous vegetation or combustible material removal.
- I. No Parcel owner may allow any portion of vegetation on his or her property to interfere with street and emergency vehicle access, regardless of whether the access is along a public street or along a private residential access road. The Public Official may provide written notice to the property owner requiring vegetation to be trimmed to at least 13.5 feet of vertical clearance and at least 10 feet of horizontal vegetation management from the edge of the roadway when the Public Official determines the vegetation would otherwise interfere with street or emergency vehicle access.
 - 1. If the Parcel Owner fails to maintain these clearance requirements, the Public Official may abate this nuisance without further notice and at the Parcel Owner's expense.
 - 2. Pursuant to applicable governing codes and regulations, as amended, a Public Official may summarily abate weeds or hazardous growth on private property that in any way hinders emergency access and may charge the Parcel Owner for the abatement cost.

Fuel Separation

The Fuel Separation method shall be implemented as follows:

(A) Minimum clearance between fuels surrounding each building or structure shall range from 4 feet to 40 feet in all directions, both horizontally and vertically.

(B) Clearance distances between vegetation shall depend on the slope, vegetation size, vegetation type (brush, grass, trees), and other fuel characteristics (fuel compaction, chemical content etc.). Properties with greater fire hazards, including but not limited to steep slopes and large vegetation, will require greater separation between fuels. For example, properties on steep slopes having large-sized vegetation will require greater spacing between individual trees and bushes (see Plant Spacing Guidelines and Case Examples below).

(C) Groups of vegetation (numerous plants growing together less than 10 feet in total foliage width) may be treated as a single plant. For example, three individual manzanita plants growing together with a total foliage width of eight feet can be “grouped” and considered as one plant and spaced according to the Plant Spacing Guidelines in this document.

(D) Grass generally should not exceed 4 inches in height. However,

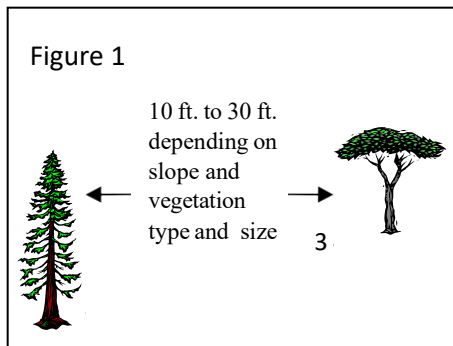
homeowners may keep grass and other forbs less than 18 inches in height

above the ground when these grasses are isolated from other fuels or

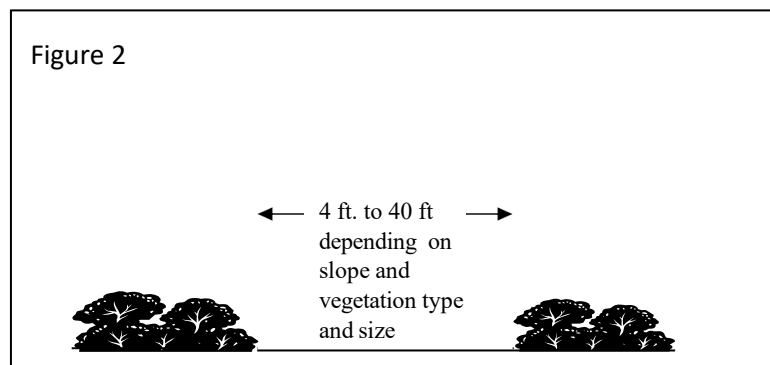
where necessary to stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

(E) Table 1. Plant Spacing Requirements.

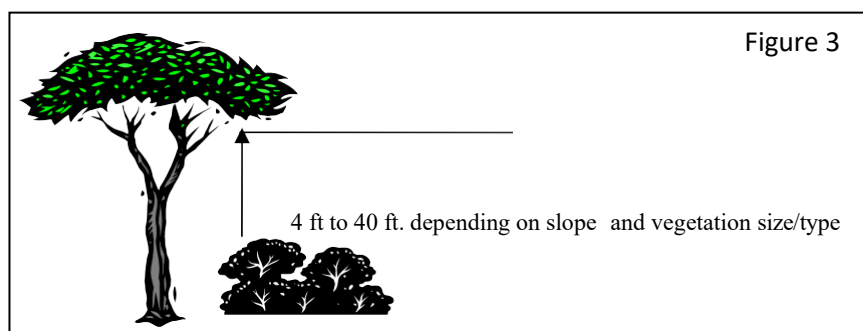
| Plant Spacing Requirements | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Trees | Minimum horizontal space from edge of one tree canopy to the edge of the next | |
| | Slope | Spacing |
| | 0% to 20 % | 10 feet |
| | 20% to 40% | 20 feet |
| | Greater than 40% | 30 feet |
| Shrubs | Minimum horizontal space between edges of shrub | |
| | Slope | Spacing |
| | 0% to 20 % | 2 times the height of the shrub |
| | 20% to 40% | 4 times the height of the shrub |
| | Greater than 40% | 6 times the height of the shrub |
| Vertical Space | Minimum vertical space between top of shrub and bottom of lower tree branches: 3 times the height of the shrub | |



(F) Figure 1. Horizontal clearance between trees to reduce the spread of fire from one fuel to the next. Figure 1 is a visual representation of paragraphs 2(A) and (B).



(G) Figure 2. Horizontal clearance between shrubs to reduce the spread of fire from one fuel to the next. Figure 2 is a visual representation of paragraphs 2(A) and (B).



(H) Figure 3. Horizontal clearance between aerial fuels and surface fuels to remove ladder fuels and reduce the spread of fire from shorter to taller fuels. Figure 3 is a visual representation of paragraphs 2(A) and (B).

(3) To achieve defensible space while retaining a stand of larger trees with a continuous tree canopy, the Continuous Tree Canopy method shall be implemented as follows:

(A) All surface fuels greater than four inches (4 in.) in height shall be removed. Single-specimen trees or other vegetation may be retained provided they are well-spaced, well-pruned, and create a condition that reduces the potential spread of fire.

(B) Lower limbs of trees shall be pruned to at least six (6) feet up to 15 feet (or the lower 1/3 of branches for trees less than 18 feet tall). Properties with greater fire hazards, such as steeper slopes or more severe fire danger, will require pruning heights in the upper end of this range.

(C) Figure 4. Defensible space retaining continuous trees. Figure 4 is a visual representation of paragraphs 3(A) and (B).



In both the Fuel Separation and Continuous Tree Canopy methods the following standards apply:

(A) Dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels shall be removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be maintained to a maximum depth of three inches (3 in.).

(B) Maintain-Cut annual grasses and forbs down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).

(C) All exposed wood piles must have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

Enforcement

- A. The Public Official shall be the primary authority for enforcement of this Article and shall administer and enforce the requirements as provided in this Article.
- B. The Public Official shall have the following responsibilities and authorities in the enforcement and administration of the provisions of this Article:
 - 1. Receive and respond to complaints through planning and conducting inspections within the limits of available resources.
 - 2. Review the requirements of this Article with property owners and/or occupants found to be out of compliance, to support voluntary compliance with the provisions of this Article.
 - 3. The determination for appropriate clearance distances will be made based upon a visual inspection of the Parcel and shall consider all factors that place the Parcel or adjoining Structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the Parcel or adjoining Structure(s) is located.
 - 4. Prepare and issue Notices to Abate, and such other notices as may be necessary to encourage voluntary compliance with the provisions of this Article.
 - 5. Carry out all enforcement and abatement proceedings as described in this Article.
 - 6. Conduct post-notice/pre-abatement inspections and documentation and conduct post-abatement inspections and documentation.
 - 7. The Public Official may, at his or her discretion, issue an administrative citation for violations of this Article, in lieu of abating a parcel.
 - 8. Within local fire district boundaries, inspections established by this Article may be performed by designated fire district personnel.
 - 9. Conduct abatements and handle accounting, assessment, and collection of abatement costs, including recordation of liens.
- B. Nothing herein shall limit the ability of a Public Official, to enforce the provisions of this Article, from making initial inspections or independent compliance checks without first receiving a complaint.
- C. This Article may be enforced within those areas where independent fire districts have governing bodies other than the City, County, or City and County, provided the governing body acts to enforce this Article by adopting an appropriate resolution authorizing the fire chief of the district to enforce the requirements of this Article.

Notice to Abate

Whenever the Public Official determines, based on a planned inspection, that a Parcel is in violation of this Article and requires abatement, the Public Official shall send the owner of record for the Parcel a Notice to Abate. The Notice to Abate shall be in writing and shall:

- A. Identify the owner(s) of the Parcel upon which the violation exists, as named in the records of the City, County, or City and County Assessor, and identify the occupant(s) or person in control of the property, if other than the owner(s) and if known or reasonably identifiable.
- B. Describe the location of the Parcel by its commonly used street address, if any, and identify the Parcel by reference to the Assessor's Parcel Number, if any.
- C. Briefly describe the violation(s) on the Parcel and identify the fuel modification area(s) which are required to abate the violation(s) and bring the Parcel into compliance with this Article.
- D. Contain a statement that the legal owner or occupant is required to correct the violation and allow at least thirty (30) calendar days from the date the notice is served for the work to be completed.
- E. Outline the appeal process as provided in the Appeals Process section of this Article.
- F. Contain a statement that, unless the legal owner or occupant abates the violation(s) and brings the Parcel into compliance with this Article or seeks an appeal within the time prescribed in the notice, the violation may be abated at the legal owner's expense. It shall also state that the abatement costs, including administrative costs, may be made a special assessment added to the City, County, or City and County assessment roll and become a lien on the real property, or be placed on the unsecured tax roll.
- G. Contain a statement that this Article provides that the Parcel owner and any person in possession of the Parcel upon which the Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material is found to exist shall be jointly and severally liable for all abatement costs incurred by the City, County, or City and County.

Service of Notice to Abate

All notices required by this Article shall be served in the following manner:

- A. By delivering it personally to the legal owner(s) of the Parcel(s) and to the occupant(s), or by mailing it by first-class United States mail to the legal owner(s) of the Parcel at his or her address as it appears on the last equalized assessment roll and to any non-owner occupant(s), if known, at the street address for the Parcel.
 1. If the records of the City, County, or City and County Assessor show that the ownership has changed since the last equalized assessment roll was completed, the notice shall also be mailed to the new owner(s) at his or her address as it appears in said records; or
 2. In the event that, after reasonable effort, the Public Official is unable to serve the notice as set forth above, service shall be accomplished by posting copies of the notice along the frontage of the subject Parcel(s), and at such other locations on the Parcel(s) as are reasonably likely to provide notice to the owner(s) and any person known by the Public Official to be in possession of the Parcel(s). At least two (2) copies of the notice shall be posted on a Parcel pursuant to this Section.
- B. The date of service for the notice is deemed to be the date of personal delivery or posting, or three (3) days after deposit in the United States mail.

Enforcement Process

- A. Not less than thirty (30) days after the Notice to Abate is served, the Public Official shall conduct a post-notice/pre-abatement inspection on the Parcel and, if the required fuel modification area(s) have not been performed, the Public Official may require that the required fuel modification area(s) be completed by the City, County, or City and County, and the cost of enforcement and the abatement costs, including administrative costs, may be made a special assessment added to the City, County, or City and County assessment roll and become a lien on the real property, or be placed on the unsecured tax roll.
- B. For Parcels owned or controlled by public agencies, the Public Official or designee may provide a Notice of Nuisance and include the project area in the local community wildfire protection plan and request the Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material be abated in accordance with the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 (H.R. 1904) or Government Code 51182.

Appeals Process

- A. Any person upon whom a Notice to Abate has been served may appeal the determination of the Public Official by delivering a written request for hearing to the Clerk of the City Council/Board's office within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Notice to Abate, together with payment of any appeal fee as may be duly adopted by the City Council/Council/Board of Supervisors. The written request shall include a statement of all facts supporting the appeal. The time requirement for filing such a written request shall be deemed jurisdictional and may not be waived.
- B. If a timely appeal is filed with the Clerk of the City Council/Board, no further enforcement action will be taken until after the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body has made a determination on the appeal. In the absence of a timely filed written request that complies fully with the requirements of this section, the determination of the Public Official as set forth in the Notice to Abate shall become final and conclusive on the thirty-first (31st) day following service of the notice.
- C. The hearing on the appeal shall occur not more than thirty (30) days after receipt of a timely appeal and shall provide written notice of the hearing date and time to the appellant at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the hearing unless such time limits are waived in writing by the Public Official and the appellant. Continuances of the hearing will only be granted on a showing of good cause. Unavailability of an attorney does not constitute "good cause."

Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body

A Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body is hereby established to hear appeals on any Notice to Abate issued by a Public Official. The Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body shall consist of the City, County, or City and County Fire Marshal or designee, the City, County, or City and County's Emergency Services Program Manager or designee, and a Fire Chief from a local fire department/protection district selected by the City, County, or City and County Fire Chiefs' Association; provided, however, that if the Notice to Abate being appealed was issued by the City, County, or City and County Fire Marshal or designee, then the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body shall consist of the City, County, or City and County's Emergency Services Program Manager or designee, and two (2) Fire Chiefs from a local fire department/protection district selected by the Emergency Services Program Manager. The Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body shall have the authority to amend, dismiss, or uphold a Notice to Abate by a majority vote.

Abatement by Public Official

- A. If, at the end of the time allowed for compliance in the original Notice to Abate, or as extended in cases of appeal, or as specified by the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body, compliance has not been accomplished, the Public Official issuing the notice, or the agency of which he or she is an officer, may pursue a lawful abatement. The Public Official may proceed with the abatement of the Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material and provide that it be removed by Public Official or by employees of the agency or by a private contractor selected by the agency in accordance with applicable governing codes and regulations. The cost of such removal and enforcement accompanied by a reasonable administrative cost, may be made a special assessment added to the City, County, or City and County assessment roll and become a lien on the real property, or be placed on the unsecured tax roll.
- B. The costs so assessed shall be limited to the actual costs incurred by the Public Official and the City, County, or City and County in enforcing the violation and abatement upon the subject Parcel. Such costs may include, but are not limited to, the costs of all prior inspections, appeal hearings, and other enforcement actions leading up to the abatement, payments to the contractor, costs of site inspection, costs of notice, boundary determination, and measurement, costs for material disposal and all clerical, personnel, consultant, and other administrative costs.

Abatement Penalties and Costs

Upon expiration of the time limits and appeal processes established by this Article, the Public Official shall acquire jurisdiction to abate the nuisance, and may carry out the following as appropriate:

- A. Disposal of Materials. Any materials abated may be disposed of as a part of the removal process including, as appropriate, recycling or as a part of a Biomass utilization program.
- B. Cost Accounting, Receipts, and Notice of Assessment. The Public Official shall keep an itemized account of the costs of enforcing the provisions of this Article. Upon completion of the abatement, the Public Official shall prepare a notice to be served on the affected Parcel(s) as provided in City, County, or City and County code and specifying:
 - 1. The work done (supported by before and after pictures);
 - 2. An itemized account of the costs and receipts of performing the work;
 - 3. An address, legal description, or other description sufficient to identify the Parcel that was subject to abatement costs, including administrative costs, and added to a special assessment roll and become a lien on the real property, or be placed on the unsecured tax roll;
 - 4. The amount of the assessment proposed to be levied against the Parcel(s), or the amount to be refunded, if any, due to excess proceeds over the expenses;
 - 5. The time and place where the Public Official will submit the account to the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body for confirmation. The time and place specified shall be no less than fifteen (15) days after the service of the notice;
 - 6. A statement that the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body will hear and consider objections and protests to the account and proposed assessment or refund.

Hearing on Proposed Assessment and/or Lien

At the time and place fixed in the notice, the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body will hear and consider the account and proposed assessment, together with objections and protests thereto. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body may make such modifications and revisions of the proposed account and assessment as deemed just and may order the account and proposed assessment confirmed or denied, in whole or in part, or as modified and revised, and shall issue a written recommendation regarding the proposed assessment and/or lien to the Council/Board of Supervisors. The City Council/Board of Supervisors may summarily adopt the recommendation of the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Hearing Body without further notice of hearing or may set the matter for a de novo hearing in accordance with applicable governing codes and regulations. The determination of the Council/Board of Supervisors as to all matters contained therein shall be final and conclusive.

Notice, Recordation, and Collection of Assessment and/or Lien:

Upon confirmation of an assessment by the City Council/Council/Board of Supervisors, Code Compliance shall notify the affected Parcel owners by certified mail, return receipt requested, of the amount of the pending lien confirmed by the City Council/Council/Board of Supervisors, and advise them that they may pay the account in full within thirty (30) days in order to avoid the lien being recorded against the parcel(s). If the lien amount is not paid by the date stated in the letter, Code Compliance shall prepare and have recorded a Notice of Lien with the City, County, or City and County Clerk-Recorder's office. The Notice of Lien shall contain:

1. A legal description, address and/or other description sufficient to identify the Parcel(s) to be liened;
 2. A description of the proceeding under which the special assessment was made, including the order of the City Council/Board of Supervisors under this code confirming the assessment;
 3. The amount of the assessment;
 4. A claim of lien upon the described Parcel(s).
- A. Upon the recordation of a Notice of Lien, the amount claimed shall constitute a lien upon the described Parcel(s), pursuant to applicable governing codes and regulations. Such lien shall be at parity with the liens of State and City, County, or City and County taxes, to the extent allowed by applicable law.
- B. After recordation, the Notice of Lien shall be delivered to the City, County, or City and County Auditor-Controller, who shall enter the amount of the lien on the assessment roll as a special assessment. The amount set forth shall be subject to the same penalties and interest as ordinary City, County, or City and County taxes. All laws applicable to the levy, collection and enforcement of City, County, or City and County taxes are hereby made applicable to such assessment to the extent allowed by applicable law.

Violations

Pursuant to City, County, or City and County Code, it shall be an infraction or misdemeanor for any person, natural or corporate, owning, possessing, occupying, or controlling any lands or premises to fail to perform the duty set forth in this Article, or to fail to comply with the requirements in the Notice to Abate as specified in this Article, or to interfere with the performance of the duties herein specified for any of the Public Officials named in this part, or to refuse to allow any such Public Official, or approved private contractors, to enter upon any Parcel for the purpose of lawfully inspecting and/or as ordered, removing any Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material hereinbefore described as a public nuisance, or to interfere in any manner whatever with the Public Officials or contractors in the work of a lawful inspection and ordered removal herein provided.

Penalties for Violations

- A. This Article is a local safety code. Every violation of this Article which is determined to be an infraction or an administrative violation shall be punishable in accordance with Government Code Sections 53069.4 and 25132, as may be amended from time to time.
- B. Any person violating or failing to comply with the provisions of this Article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, except that when the District Attorney or City, County, or City and County Counsel shall elect to charge such violation as an infraction, it shall be an infraction. Each such person shall be guilty of a separate offense for each and every day during any portion of which any violation of any provision of this Article is committed, continued, or permitted by such person and shall be punishable accordingly.
- C. Notwithstanding any other law, a violation of local building and safety codes that is an infraction is punishable under applicable governing codes and regulations., as may be amended from time to time, by the following:
 - 1. A fine not exceeding one hundred thirty dollars (\$130) for a first violation.
 - 2. A fine not exceeding seven hundred dollars (\$700) for a second violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation.
 - 3. A fine not exceeding one thousand three hundred dollars (\$1,300) for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation.
 - 4. Upon a subsequent violation within a two (2) year period the violator shall be liable to the City, County, or City and County for the abatement costs, including, but not limited to, costs incurred by local independent fire districts, in accordance with applicable governing codes and regulations.
 - 5. Unless a violation creates an immediate danger to health and safety, a Responsible Party shall be provided with notice and an opportunity to correct the violation prior to the imposition of the administrative penalty such as, but not limited to, fines, citation, or forced abatement.
 - 6. Acts, omissions, or conditions in violation of this Article that continue to exist, or occur on more than one day, constitute separate violations on each day. Fines may be levied.
- D. Pursuant to applicable governing codes and regulations, if the City, County, or City and County levies a fine pursuant to this section, the City, County, or City and County shall establish a process for granting a hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine upon a showing by the responsible party that the responsible party has made a bona fide effort to comply after the first violation and that payment of the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden on the responsible party.
- E. Any person convicted of a misdemeanor under the provisions of this Code shall be punishable by imprisonment in the City, County, or City and County jail not exceeding six months, or by fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or by both.

- F. The administrative penalty, or any portion thereof, for a first-time violation which has become effective following the corrective period, may be waived by the Public Official in his or her sole discretion only if the Responsible Party corrects the violation in accordance with all conditions established by the Public Official.
- G. If after a third inspection a Parcel owner continues to be noncompliant, the Public Official may issue a noncompliance citation. This can be waived by the Public Official if the Parcel owner is cooperating, performing best efforts, and mitigation progress is visible.
- H. Whenever a notice has been issued, the Public Official may record a notice of noncompliance with the office of the City, County, or City and County Recorder of City, County, or City and County and shall notify the Parcel owner of such action. The notice of noncompliance shall describe the Parcel, shall set forth the noncomplying conditions, and shall state that any abatement costs incurred by the City, County, or City and County as a result of the violations of this Article may be specially assessed as a lien on the property and that the Parcel owner has been so notified.
- I. Alternatively, the Public Official may prosecute violations of this Article by civil action, including, without limitation, issuance of administrative citations.

Authority to Promulgate Reasonable Rules and Regulations

The City Council/Board of Supervisors reserves its right to adopt reasonable rules, regulations, and resolutions consistent with this Article to enforce, interpret, and carry out the provisions of this Article. Such rules, regulations and resolutions may vary between different areas within City, County, or City and County.

No Duty to Enforce

Nothing in this Article shall be construed as imposing on a Public Official or the City, County, or City and County of _____, any duty to issue a Notice to Abate, nor to abate any Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material within a Parcel's Defensible Space, nor to take any other action with regard to any unlawful Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material, and neither the Public Official nor the City, County, or City and County shall be held liable for failure to issue a Notice to Abate any unlawful Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material, nor for failure to abate any unlawful Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material, nor for failure to take any other action with regard to any unlawful Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material.

Appendix B

DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTION IMPLEMENTATION

[###-#]

OVERVIEW

Defensible Space Inspections ensure that required clearance and vegetation management practices within the City, County, or City and County of _____, are followed and always maintained at all times of the year.

The City, County, or City and County of _____, provides the local coordination and support of the Defensible Space Inspection Program. These efforts include but are not limited to:

- Hiring, scheduling, and supervision of Defensible Space Inspectors
- Allocated budget management
- Coordination of supplies, transportation, training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and all other necessary items for the successful implementation of the program

PERSON / PROGRAM / FUNCTION AND ACTIONS

| Person / Program / Function | Actions |
|--|--|
| <u>City, County, or City and County of _____</u> | Position Funding Allocation |
| Chief | Support and coordinate the Defensible Space Inspection Program |
| Defensible Space Coordinator | Coordinate the <u>City, County, or City and County of _____</u> , Defensible Space Program |

RELATED FORM(S) / LINK(S)

Defensible Space Inspection Policy
Training and Reference Material

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT(S)

Wildfire Prevention Division

REVISION DATE

Revision Date: 12/2022 Last Reviewed: 12/2022

Appendix C

DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTION PROGRAM

[###-#]

POLICY STATEMENT

The City, County, or City and County of _____, Defensible Space (DSpace) Inspection Program helps ensure that structures in wildland and wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas have sufficient clearance for firefighter and public safety, and to ensure structures have the best possible chance of survivability when exposed to unwanted and destructive wildfires.

DEFINITION(S)

Defensible Space: The buffer created between a building or structure including attached structures and the grass, trees, shrubs, plants, other vegetation, or fuel that surrounds it. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it helps protect the home from catching fire—either from embers, direct flame contact and/or radiant heat.

Defensible Space Inspection: A systematic inspection of the space between a building and the surrounding vegetation to ensure compliance with vegetation management directives.

Defensible Space Inspector (DSI): An inspector trained and authorized to evaluate the defensible space surrounding a structure.

*Additional definitions can be found in 14 CCR § 1299.03, PRC § 4291, BOF General Guidelines, 2013 CFC § 505.1, 2013 CBC § 2113.9.2.

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| Authority | Responsibilities |
|-----------------------|---|
| Defensible Space Unit | Jurisdiction-wide program administration, electronic data collection support, statistical tracking, and reports |
| Chief | Department level program management |
| | |

RELATED FORM(S) / LINK(S)

(Replace all below with local forms and handbooks)

[Defensible Space Inspection Procedure](#)

[Conducting Defensible Space Inspections](#)

[Documenting Defensible Space Inspections](#)

AUTHORITY

14 California Code of Regulations § 1299

Government Code 51182

California Building Code

California Fire Code Chapter 49

BOF General Guidelines Item 3

REFERENCE(S)

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT(S)

Defensible Space Unit

REVISION DATE

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Last Reviewed: 12/2022

Appendix D

CONDUCTING DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTIONS [###-#]

OVERVIEW

The Defensible Space Inspector (DSI) ensures that required clearance and vegetation management practices within the City, County, or City and County of _____, are followed and always maintained at all times of the year.

For purposes of this procedure, “defensible space” means that area described in 14 California Code of Regulations 1299, Government Code 51182, Public Resources Code Section 4291, and as otherwise described in this Code

For purposes of this procedure, “fuel” means any combustible material, including petroleum-based products, cultivated landscape plants, grasses, and weeds, and wildland vegetation.

For purposes of this procedure, a “Structure” for the purpose of an ember-resistant zone shall include any attached or detached deck that falls within Zone 0 and/or Zone 1.

Adhering to all Injury and Illness Protection Policies, the DSI will conduct defensible space inspections using the following criteria:

(a) Inspection Criteria for Zone 0:

- J. Remove fuels and items that could catch fire which are the first five feet (5 ft.) of or above the “Structure”
- K. Remove fuels and items that could catch fire which are adjacent to or under combustible decks, porches, balconies, stairs, or similar attached accessories.
- L. No combustible bark, or mulch is allowed in this zone.
- M. Ensure all live tree branches are kept a minimum of 10 feet above the roof and decking.
- N. Ensure all live branches are kept a minimum of 5 feet away from the sides of the structure.
- O. Ensure all branches are a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) away from chimney and stovepipe outlets.
- P. All dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles have been removed from around the " Structure” including on the roof or rain gutters of the "Building or Structure" or any other location within the Zone.

Relocate exposed firewood piles outside of Zone 0.

Suggestions and Education in Zone 0:

- Q. Use hardscape like gravel, flagstone, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete, or other noncombustible materials.
- R. Limit combustible items such as outdoor furniture, planters, and other combustible items on top of decks.
- S. Replace combustible fencing, gates, trellis, and arbors attached to the "Structure(s)" with noncombustible features.
- T. Relocate garbage and recycling containers outside of this zone unless in a secured, fire-resistant enclosure or covered with a secured, fire-resistant material.
- U. Relocate boats, RVs, vehicles, and other combustible items outside of this zone unless in a secured, fire-resistant enclosure or covered with a secured, fire-resistant material.

(b) Inspection Criteria for Zone 1:

- (1) All dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles have been removed from the Zone.
- (2) All exposed firewood piles are located outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely covered in a fire-resistant material.
- (3) No flammable vegetation and/or materials that could catch fire are located adjacent to or under combustible decks, balconies, and stairs.
- (4) Ensure horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees is maintained using the "Fuel Separation" method, the "Continuous Tree Canopy" method or a combination of both to achieve defensible space clearance requirements.
- (5) In both the Fuel Separation and Continuous Tree Canopy methods, the DSI will ensure the following standards apply:
 - a. All dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels have been removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of three inches (3 in.).
 - b. Annual grasses and forbs have been cut/trimmed down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).
 - c. Ensure all exposed wood piles have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

(c) Inspection Criteria for Zone 2:

- (1) Ensure horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees is maintained using the "Fuel Separation" method, the "Continuous Tree Canopy" method or a combination of both to achieve defensible space clearance requirements.
- (2) In both the Fuel Separation and Continuous Tree Canopy methods, the DSI will ensure the following standards apply:

- a. All dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels have been removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of three inches (3 in.).
- b. Annual grasses and forbs have been cut/trimmed down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).
- c. Ensure all exposed wood piles have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

(d) Inspection Criteria for both Zones 1 and 2:

- (1) The DSI will ensure Liquid Propane Gas (LPG) storage tanks have the following minimum clearance: ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance to bare mineral soil or other noncombustible hardscapes such as gravel, flagstone, permeable pavers or blocks, pervious or porous concrete and no flammable vegetation for an additional ten feet (10 ft.) around their exterior.
- (2) Provide educational information to the occupant or property owner at the time of inspection.
 - a. Advise the occupant or property owner to only clear vegetation to bare mineral soil around outbuildings, LPG tanks and exposed wood piles. Avoiding the use of heavy equipment in and around streams and seasonal drainages is important for protecting water quality. Vegetation removal can cause soil erosion, especially on steep slopes. Keep soil disturbance to a minimum on steep slopes.

PERSON / PROGRAM / FUNCTION AND ACTIONS

| Person / Program / Function | Actions |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Defensible Space Inspector | Using the proper forms, instruments, and materials, conduct defensible space inspections respectfully and professionally |
| | |
| | |

RELATED FORM(S) / LINK(S)

(Replace all below with local forms and handbooks)

[Defensible Space Inspection Policy](#)

[Defensible Space Inspection Procedure](#)

IIPP-2

IIPP-3

LE100a

Training Guides and Reference Material

Property Inspection Guide, 2021 version (DRAFT), December 2021

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT(S)

Defensible Space Unit

REVISION DATE

Revision Date: 12/2022
Last Reviewed: 12/2022

Appendix E

DOCUMENTING DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTIONS

[####-#]

OVERVIEW

Using the approved Documentation of Compliance and the approved electronic data collection application, the Defensible Space Inspector (DSI) will accurately document all defensible space inspections conducted within the City, County, or City and County of _____.

- Legible inspection documentation will be left in a conspicuous place after each defensible space inspection.
 - Any violations found will be marked on the form and explained to the occupant, agent, or owner of the property.
- Using methods described within the training and reference material, each defensible space inspection will be documented using the approved electronic data collection application, as determined by the City, County, or City and County.
- Using quality control measures described within the training and reference material, each inspection will be checked for accuracy.
- Dashboards are used to track all defensible space activity and provide an easy-to-understand reference for personnel.
 - Dashboards will be maintained by the City, County, or City and County.
- Template reports are available through the Report Request program.
- Custom reports will be generated by the City, County, or City and County which can be requested through DSI support.

PERSON / PROGRAM / FUNCTION AND ACTIONS

| Person / Program / Function | Actions |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Defensible Space Inspector | Document defensible space inspections accurately and efficiently Use quality control measures and dashboards to ensure accuracy and efficiency |
| Defensible Space Unit | <u>City, County, or City and County of _____</u> , program management, electronic data collection support, statistical tracking, and reports |
| | |

RELATED FORM(S) / LINK(S)

(Replace all below with local forms and handbooks)

Defensible Space Inspection Policy

Dashboards

Training and Reference Material

Reports

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT(S)

Defensible Space Unit

REVISION DATE

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Appendix F

Training Curriculum

Home Ignition Zone / Defensible Space Assessor

Unit 1: Introduction

Topic 1-1: Orientation and Administration

Unit 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Topic 2-1: Position Description

Topic 2-2: Roles and Responsibilities

Unit 3: Wildfire in the Natural and Built Environment

Topic 3-1: Wildfire Development

Topic 3-2: Fire Mechanics and Behavior

Unit 4: Codes and Regulations

Topic 4-1: Responsibility Areas

Topic 4-2: Statutes, Regulations, and Ordinances

Topic 4-3: Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Unit 5: Research, Case Studies, and Data Analysis

Topic 5-1: Research, Case Studies, and Data Analysis

Unit 6: Defensible Space

Topic 6-1: Defensible Space Standards

Unit 7: Home Hardening

Topic 7-1: Home Components and Vulnerabilities

Topic 7-2: Ember Resistant Materials and Construction Methods

Topic 7-3: Retrofitting Existing Homes

Unit 8: Assessment Process

Topic 8-1: Preparing for an Assessment

Topic 8-2: Safety Considerations

Topic 8-3: Communications

Topic 8-4: Data Collection Requirements

Topic 8-5: Conducting an Assessment

Topic 8-6: Other Prevention Measures

Topic 8-7: Validating Assessment Data

Appendix G

POSITION ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS DUTIES

Under close supervision of the XXXX, the Defensible Space Inspector (DSI) conducts defensible space inspections in accordance with City, County, or City and County Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material Abatement Ordinance.

Defensible Space Inspections and Home Hardening Education

*Conduct Inspections of property within the City, County, or City and County jurisdiction to ensure City, County, or City and County Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material Abatement Ordinance (Defensible Space) compliance for persons who own, lease, control, operate, or maintain a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material. *Contact landowners/residents/tenants to provide education on Defensible Space requirements, wildfire safety/preparedness, and a defensible space inspection with corresponding documentation. *Implement the inspection plan to efficiently cover the targeted areas and maximize public contact through defensible space inspections. *Assist in the development and distribution of educational material and media releases pertaining to Defensible Space. Provide guidance and education on Home Hardening.

Defensible Space Inspection Program Management

*Receive requests for, and schedule initial inspections, for defensible space to ensure compliance with City, County, or City and County Hazardous Vegetation and Combustible Material Abatement Ordinance. *Schedule and conduct re-inspections on a property when necessary. *For non-compliant properties, identify the need for appropriate enforcement action and notify the City, County, or City and County Fire Prevention Bureau of such. *Conduct quality control and validation measures on field collected data to ensure compliance with City, County, or City and County Fire Department standards. *Maintain defensible space mobile smart devices (tablets/phones) assigned to the City, County, or City and County to the Fire Department standard. *Assist the Defensible Space Program manager in determining defensible space inspection areas to be targeted for inspection by the DSIs.

Report Writing, Records Management and Training

*Review all documents, laws, rules, and regulations related to defensible space inspections. *Utilize specified Department forms to document inspection results. *Prepare documents which include: Inspection Schedule, notice of defensible space inspection, notice to abate, inspection completions, re-inspections, and records of total number of inspections. *Maintain orderly files for City, County, or City and County use

containing all work completed. *Provide recurring City, County, or City and County specific training to returning and new DSIs, including changes to the defensible space laws, defensible space database and smart device use, and public education related to wildfire safety/preparedness. *Utilize computers, mobile smart devices (tablets/phones), GPS units, digital cameras and other digital devices as needed. *Documents to be reviewed and approved by supervisor.

Other Duties

*Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates respect for all employees and others they meet during work hours, during work related activities, and anytime they represent the City, County, or City and County. Additionally, all City, County, or City and County employees are responsible for promoting a safe and secure work environment free from discrimination, harassment, inappropriate conduct, or retaliation.

*Complete required training. Other duties as assigned.