



**VALLEJO FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION**

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www.ci.vallejo.ca.us/cityhall/departmentsdivisions/fire



2023 Vegetation Management Guidelines

SCOPE:

This guideline is necessary to provide fire control points and to create or maintain a defensible space around buildings and property lines. Creating defensible space will help minimize fire damage and provide a space or fuel break where firefighters can defend against fire.

CODES AND STANDARDS:

Weeds, grass, vines and other growth that are capable of endangering property shall be cut down and removed by the owner or occupant of the premises. Vegetation clearance requirements in the wildland-urban interface areas shall be in accordance with CFC Chapter 49, CFC Section 304.1.2: Vegetation and Title 19, Division 1§307(b): Clearances. VMC 7.56.010 Vegetation Management and Brush Clearance Ordinance.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

For properties with annual special needs or specific issues, a letter will be sent with instructions to the property owner on how to abate these fire hazards.

1. ABATEMENT CRITERIA:

Parcels one (1) acre or less must have all combustible growth cut or removed. Larger parcels shall maintain a minimum disked perimeter around the property, turning the soil in such a way as to bury all vegetation. Where larger parcels are being disked, additional fuel breaks may be required to divide the property into smaller areas that would separate large amounts of fuel. The disked area should be a minimum of 30' wide. Hillside parcels may require entire parcel abatement if combustible structures are present.

A defensible space of 30'-100', cut 2 Inches off the ground, depending on grade and other factors, around all structures, either man-made or natural, in which material is capable of allowing fire to spread uncontrolled, must be cleared, treated or modified to slow the rate and intensity of an approaching fire. Please see Figure I illustration at the end of this document for more information on vegetation clearances.

Roadways, driveways and Fire Department access roads shall be cleared of combustible vegetation equal to the width of the road plus ten feet (10') on both sides.

The property owner must also mitigate any additional fire hazard(s) that are determined by the City's Fire Chief.

Mowing is acceptable where disking is impractical or inappropriate. These areas would include, but are not limited to, biologically sensitive areas or habitats. Mowing with a tractor is sometimes impractical due to terrain. Mowing with a handheld weed-eater is acceptable and referred to as "handwork". In some cases, use of goats and sheep are acceptable abatement practices. If you are unclear on the appropriate method to abate, contact the Fire Prevention Division at (707) 648-4565 for guidance.

Property owners that notice the existence of rare, threatened or endangered plants or wildlife on a noticed property must notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (or appropriate agency) at least ten (10) days in advance of undertaking vegetation clearance. If the landowner is aware of any State or Federally-listed endangered species on the property, then the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife should be notified prior to the abatement. If a State or Federal candidate or listed species is killed, injured or captured, the landowner shall report this information to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, respectfully.

2. SAFETY REMINDER:

When mowing weeds, it is imperative it be done safely: One small spark from a mower blade hitting a rock can result in a large fire. All mowing should be completed as early in the morning as possible, while temperatures are low, humidity is high, and grasses are still damp with dew. When mowing always have a water fire extinguisher or other water source and pointed shovel available. Mow early and often, THANK YOU.

