



NEWS

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Open Burning Season Begins for Range Management Fires

The open burning season for Range Management begins Thursday, July 1, and will run through April 30, 2005, according to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Range Management fires, which are for disposing of unwanted vegetation from public or private lands where animals such as horses, cattle and sheep are allowed to graze, must be set or allowed by the public fire official having jurisdiction and must be necessary to maintain and continue the grazing of animals as a gainful occupation. Brush to be burned must be treated at least six months prior to burning if determined to be technically feasible by the State Director of Forestry or public fire official. Unwanted trees over 6 inches in diameter must be felled prior to burning and dried for a minimum of six months.

Range Management fires that are expected to exceed 10 acres in size or burn pile vegetation cleared or generated from more than 10 acres of land, are regulated as a Wildland Vegetation Management fires and are subject to the prescribed burning requirements in District Regulation 5, sections 401.15 and 408.

Open burning has been regulated in the Bay Area since 1957 because of its considerable contribution to air pollution. While backyard burning of leaves, trash, and grass cuttings or prunings have been prohibited in the Bay Area since 1970, certain fires for agricultural purposes, flood control, fire training and the prevention of fire hazards are exempted from District regulations for specified periods throughout the year.

Although certain fires are allowed during the appropriate burn season, each day of the year is designated as either a BURN or a NO BURN day. On days when air pollution caused by open burning will be minimized by favorable weather conditions, the Air District designates it a BURN day.

Allowed fires can only take place on a BURN day. This means that even though a burn season may be in effect, the party seeking open burn authorization must check with the Air District for daily burn status prior to burning. BURN/NO BURN days are forecasted by 3 p.m. on the Air District's toll-free number **1-800-HELP-AIR** for the following day.

Open burning seasons apply to the entire Bay Area, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, southwestern Solano and southern Sonoma counties.

Bay Area residents may request a brochure about the District's open burning regulation by calling the Public Information Office 415-749-4900. To register complaints about illegal burning or other odor problems, call the District's 24-hour complaint line at 1-800-334-ODOR.

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