

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire

Santa Clara Unit



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Defensible Space Inspections Begin

Morgan Hill – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Santa Clara Unit has begun Defensible Space Inspections throughout the State Responsibility Area (SRA) within Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Western Stanislaus and Western San Joaquin counties.

Chief Derek Witmer would like to remind residents that “creating and maintaining Defensible Space is critical for the protection of their home. This year we have increased our inspection staffing and now we need the public to make sure they, too, are prepared for the increased fire risk due the lack of rainfall and increased fire risk due to drought.”

Defensible space inspections are supported by the SRA Fire Prevention Fee, which is an annual fee assessed to rural residents for fire prevention activities in the SRA. The Fire Prevention Fee resulted from a law signed by Governor Brown in 2011 which imposed a fee to residents owning habitable structures in the SRA.

California Public Resources Code 4291 requires homeowners living in State Responsibility Area to maintain 100 feet of Defensible Space around structures. CAL FIRE inspectors will be educating residents and evaluating properties to make sure they are in compliance with state law.

Here are some tips that can help homes survive wildfires:

- Maintain 100 feet of Defensible Space around all structures.
- Clear all needles and leaves from roofs, eaves and rain gutters.
- Trim branches 6 feet from the ground.
- Use trimming, mowing and power equipment before 10 a.m.
- Landscape with fire resistant and drought tolerant plants that require little water.
- Remove branches away from roofs and 10 feet from the chimney.
- Keep wood piles and flammable materials at least 30 feet from the home.
- Use fire ignition resistant building material.

For more information on preparing for wildfires and defensible space visit:
www.readyforwildfire.org.

