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Tree Mortality Task Force Regulations Working Group Minutes Meeting: May 4, 2016

- The Regulations Working Group conducted a public meeting on April 25, 2016 to present and review the Guidelines for High Hazard Zone Tree Removal. Per directive 17 of the Emergency Proclamation, any entity issuing regulations or guidelines must conduct a public meeting prior to adopting them. The meeting was held at the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA 95338. There were approximately 15-20 people in attendance and 5-10 people participated via conference call. Overall the public meeting was successful. There may be a need for additional public meetings as more Counties engage with the Task Force. The deadline for public comments on the guidelines is May 5, 2016.
- The Regulations Working Group is working on a flyer for “Affected Homeowners”. Mariposa County is leading the effort and the flyer will contain statistics on the number of homeowners affected, tree mortality concerns, tree removal issues and local contacts for more information. Once reviewed, it will be provided to the TF for approval and ultimately the Public Outreach Group for distribution.
- Storage Site Case Studies:
 - Tuolumne County: The Storage Site Pilot project is scheduled to start the week of May 11th. The County continues to work though issues surrounding storage site log receipts, tracking and processing. The County is interested in possibly developing a sorting yard near Groveland, Twain Harte or Miwok. These locations would also be good for housing Air Curtin Burners. Tuolumne County will continue to work with the TF to facilitate the use of Air Curtin Burners.
 - Mariposa County: The County continues to work with Caltrans on locations for potential storage sites. Recent discussion involved water quality and the need to obtain stormwater permitting for storage sites. Stormwater permits are generally required when disturbance/development occurs on over an acre of land. There may be a need to ensure agency personnel involved with regulating storage sites are aware of the EP and how it applies to storage site development.
- The Regulations Working Group continues to work on insurance issues surrounding dead tree removal prior to obtaining coverage, cancelations and variation in



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underwriting policy. The group discussed issues and differences between two underwriter guidance tools involved with establishing fire insurance. They are from Verisk Analytics; the ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC) program and Verisk Insurance Solutions' FireLine. The tools are often interpreted differently by insurance companies leading to inconsistencies and challenges for homeowners to obtain coverage. The Department of Insurance has been involved in trying to resolve these issues of interpretation and the Counties are interested in assisting.

- The RWG identified a potential need to provide the public with information on Air Curtain Burners. Most local APQD's do not regard burners as the first and best choice in treating hazard trees. The TF may develop talking points for the ACBs that could be posted to the website. More information can be found on airburnersinc.com.
- The RWG held a County Counsel meeting May 3, 2016. This is an ongoing conference call with the various county Legal Counsel Representatives. The group discusses legal issues or needs the Counties may have. The group reviewed the recent letter to Alan Abbs from the US EPA regarding Title V permit requirements for Air Curtin Burners, solid waste exemptions for storage sites and the recent guidelines for tree removal in high hazard zones. No significant issues regarding the guidelines or CEQA were identified.
- The RWG is working on a FAQs document on Contracting for Tree Removal. The FAQs contains information on tree removal contractor license and insurance requirements, the differences in license requirements for commercial and non-commercial tree removal and provides links that will allow homeowners to confirm their contactors are licensed and insured. The RWG plans to have the FAQs completed by mid-May.
- The RWG is developing a FAQs document to explain and describe the Board of Equalization, Timber Yield Tax requirements. The circumstances surrounding how and when timber yield tax is paid are often confusing for landowners and vary depending on the agreements between landowners, timber owners and contractors. Tax exemptions exist when timber values are under \$3,000 dollars per quarter. The RWG plans to develop the FAQs to comprehensively capture and explain timber tax issues and provide landowners/timber owners needed information.
- The next RWG meeting is Friday May 13, 2016, 9:00 to 11:00.