



Legislation Text

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Memorandum

Date: February 4, 2020

To: The Honorable Moke Simon, Chair, Lake County Board of Supervisors

From: Andrew Williams, Code Enforcement Manager
David Casian, Chief Building Official/Fire Marshal
Michalyn DelValle, Community Development Director

Subject: Report of Chapter 13-Hazardous Vegetation 2019 Overview and Recommendations

Executive Summary:

The Hazardous Vegetation Ordinance passed on March 19, 2019 and went into effect on April 25, 2019. We began inspections on May 6, 2019 with two teams of four inspectors in the Kelseyville Riviera and moved through the County: Riviera West, Riviera Heights and Buckingham next to Soda Bay, followed by Middletown, Anderson Springs, Cobb and Loch Lomond. We then moved to Spring Valley, Lake Pillsbury, and so on for a total inspection count of approximately 2,000 sites. For every non-compliant inspection in the field, inspectors spent approximately 30 minutes in the office researching property owner's address, filling out paper work, mailings, and starting cases in the database; as well as not neglecting our other responsibilities of non-permitted cannabis grows, open and outdoor storage, health and safety, and so on.

Most property owners of improved properties were working on hazardous vegetation and were in voluntary compliance. A large number did not understand the new ordinance and how to become compliant but after some education, compliance was accomplished.

Cal Fire only inspects improved properties on a three year rotation. HOA's inspect improved and unimproved properties. This year the County of Lake will be participating in a beta test with Cal Fire's computer-based inspection reporting software for improved properties, whereas County of Lake Inspectors take a specific area and do the inspections and Cal Fire will take other areas with no overlap. The areas are still to be determined. After two non-compliant inspections of a property the other agency would do the third inspection with abatement process to follow.

When a property was found to be in noncompliance, a courtesy letter with a link to the Lake County Hazardous Vegetation Ordinance, was sent with 30 days to become compliant. If voluntary compliance was not achieved the property owner or owners were sent a notice of abatement with a 30 day window to become compliant. If compliance is not met possible abatement action is taken based on severity, topography, fuel load and life safety concerns. In 2019, temperatures increased early in the fire season and humidity dropped. Winds picked up making abatement hazardous and no county abatements were done.

Lake County sent out 378 Notice to Abate letters, 47 were returned undeliverable. Inspectors use the County of Lake tax roll to get addresses for the mailings. We had approximately 75% compliance to mailings sent to property owners. Unimproved properties are the real challenge due to absentee owners, deceased owners, large properties (from 1 to 100's of acres) and owners not understanding County of Lake Ordinances and so on.

If not budgeted, fill in the blanks below only:

Estimated Cost: _____ Amount Budgeted: _____ Additional Requested: _____ Future Annual Cost: _____

Consistency with Vision 2028 and/or Fiscal Crisis Management Plan (check all that apply):

☐ Not applicable

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Well-being of Residents | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Technology Upgrades</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Recovery | <input type="checkbox"/> County Workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Revenue Generation</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Process Efficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cost Savings</i> |

If request for exemption from competitive bid in accordance with County Code Chapter 2 Sec. 2-38, fill in blanks below:

Which exemption is being requested?

How long has Agreement been in place?

When was purchase last rebid?

Reason for request to waive bid?

Recommended Action:

1. Prioritize areas and start with improved property's and unimproved that are within 30 feet of any structure or egress also known as evacuation routes starting with the Cobb mountain area, Anderson Springs, Clear Lake Rivera, Rivera west Buckingham Rivera Heights and the urban interface around Lakeport and the North shore the Based on Living with Wildfire Lake County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Overview and Summary 2009
<http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Assets/County+Site/Fire+Safe+Council/cwpp/cwpp.pdf>
2. Start inspections in February or early March.
3. Put together educational Power Point (in progress) that will be given to the Fire Safe Counsel's, Fire Wise groups and will be put out on social media and press releases through local newspapers to better educate the community so they understand the ordinance and the different requirements for improved and unimproved properties.
4. In 2020 we will have one full time experienced Code Enforcement Officer assigned and one Extra Help to hazardous vegetation due to the very large area that needs to be covered in a very short amount of

time while continuing with other cases like nuisance, non-permitted cannabis, health and safety, permitted cannabis inspections, and grading/environmental.