



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NOT TOO LATE FOR FIRE PREVENTION ***County Residents Urged to Clear Brush and Create Defensible Space Around Homes***

With the most dangerous part of fire season approaching, County and fire officials remind people they can help defend themselves by clearing or cutting back weeds, dead and dying trees, and potentially combustible shrubs and vegetation around their homes.

Despite the devastating 2003 and 2007 firestorms, much of the County remains cloaked in vegetation that hasn't burned in decades and could become fuel for new fires.

A map created by the County and Forest Area Safety Task Force, a collection of more than 80 federal, state and local agencies, shows several unburned areas. They include parts of Bonsall, De Luz, Pala, Palomar Mountain, Pauma Valley, Rainbow and Valley Center in the north; Alpine, Cuyamaca, Descanso, Julian, Lakeside, Mount Laguna, Pine Valley and Warner Springs in the east; and Boulevard, Buckman Springs, Campo, Dehesa, Jacumba, Jamacha and Jamul in the southeast. The map can be accessed at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/docs/Fire_Appendix_Q.pdf.

County codes require homeowners to create 100 feet of "defensible space" around houses. Ways to do that include: keep irrigated, fire-resistant landscaping around your home trimmed and watered; don't plant flammable shrubs and trees beneath eaves and attic vents; trim trees that overhang or touch your house; keep natural vegetation trimmed and thinned.

Homeowners are urged to be careful when clearing brush. Use gas and electrical powered equipment during cooler, less windy hours before 10 a.m. when sparks are not as likely to create accidental fires.

The County's Office of Emergency Services, in partnership with the Department of Planning and Land Use, the Farm and Home Advisor and CAL FIRE has produced a Wildfire Brochure to be mailed to County residents. It addresses defensible space, fire resistant landscaping, building codes and registration for AlertSanDiego. The brochure can be downloaded at www.ReadySanDiego.org.

For more information about defensible space, visit: www.wildfirezone.org, www.fire.ca.gov and www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/fire_resistant.html.



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