



## The County of San Diego

### HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE: SEEDING FOR EROSION CONTROL IN BURNED LANDSCAPING ADJACENT TO HOMES



The first step after a wildfire is seeding severely burned *landscaped areas*. Remember many plants can recover after a fire depending on the severity of the burn. It is important to leave existing vegetation if the plants do not threaten personal safety or property (hazardous trees in danger of falling should be identified first). Avoid disturbing soil on a slope, whether burn or unburned; the roots of vegetation hold the soil together and prevent any loose dirt from washing away.

On landscaped sites where there are few plant roots to hold soil or where the soil has been disturbed, surface erosion may be reduced by seeding certain annuals. The seed mixture provided is adapted to Southern California. Seed mix includes: California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), Blue Annual Lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), Annual Fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), and Hykon Rose clover (*Trifolium hirtum*) (inoculated seed).

#### Key Steps for Seeding Burned *Landscaped Areas* around Homes

1. Plan your operation to begin before the fall rains, usually in late October into November.
2. Obtain supplies of seed, fertilizers, and straw.
3. Apply seed uniformly by hand or with a hand-operated seed spreader at the rate of ¼ to ½ pound of seed per 1000 square feet\*.
4. To improve the growth of the seed mixture, use of an organic or slow-release chemical fertilizer containing sulfur and phosphorous works best. Do not apply more than the product label recommends.
5. Spread weed-free straw (do not use hay) on top of the seed and fertilizer. We recommend about one (1) bale of straw per 1000 square feet\* of area. Wet the straw to keep it from blowing away.
6. If you can irrigate, sprinkle lightly avoiding runoff until the soil is wet to a depth of 6 inches, then sprinkle daily to keep the soil moist until seeds begin to sprout. If you can not irrigate, wait for the rains to bring up your seed mix. If it is a dry winter, apply water on the site in February and March. This will help to obtain full growth of the plants, enhance the flower display, and promote subsequent regeneration.
7. During the dry months following seeding, the grasses and plants, as well as residual straw may dry out and become a fire hazard. Remove this dry material in the zone around structures.

For additional information on erosion control:

Download the *Homeowners' Guide to Flood, Debris, and Erosion Control after Fires* at:

<http://www.sdcountyrecovery.com/documents/HomeownersErosionHandbook10-07final.pdf>

or call the County Stormwater hotline at 1-888-846-0800.

\*To calculate the square feet of a rectangular planting area, multiply the length in feet by the width in feet.  
Example: 50 feet long times 20 feet wide equals 1000 square feet.