



County of Sonoma Department of Health Services

Environmental Health

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www.sonoma-county.org/eh



Exemption from Alternative Program Requirements for Minor Burn Debris Removal and Cleanup

Where the only burn debris on a parcel is from non-residential structures less than 120 SQFT, fences, and non-structural wood material, no work plan is required so long as the structures contained no paint, pesticides, herbicides, propane, or other similar hazardous substances, and so long as the requirements listed in this document are followed. This exemption does not apply to parcels with asbestos or parcels that the EPA has flagged as potentially not cleared of household hazardous waste (HHW).

Processing and Disposal of Wood Waste

There are numerous wood products that may be left after the fires that may need to be disposed of or processed on-site. For organic wood products (trees, brush, etc.) chipping and grinding may be a viable option provided that best management practices are followed.

Chipping and Grinding on Site

- Wood chips, waste wood, or bark mulch may last several seasons, depending on the material and its depth. Occasionally, these materials are combined with soil in an erosion control mix. Spread the material to a depth of 2–6 inches, primarily on slopes less than 4:1 (25%).
- Wood chips, waste wood, and bark mulch are not allowed in streams or where they may be subject to erosion.
- Fencing, particle board, preserved lumber are not appropriate for chip and grind on-site.
- Avoidance of Spontaneous Combustion – Precautions must be taken against spontaneous combustion, and storage and/or piling of mulch and wood chips should be avoided where possible.

Grading and Erosion Control Requirements

Once grading has been completed, best management practices (BMPs) must be implemented to establish erosion control at the disturbed site.

- a. Follow best management erosion and sediment control practices (BMPs) to prevent ash, soil, and other pollutants from washing into the street, drainage courses and culverts, or onto neighboring properties. A copy of the County's storm water BMPs may be found at: <http://www.sonoma->

county.org/prmd/docs/grdord/bmpguide.htm.

- b. Stockpiled materials that are not immediately loaded for transport shall be handled and stored on site in such a manner as to avoid offsite migration. Stockpiles may be stored for up to 180 days. This may include wetting and covering the waste until it is loaded and transported. Locate stockpiles away from drainage courses, drain inlets or concentrated flows of storm water.
- c. Stockpiled material may not be stored or placed in a public roadway.
- d. If a stockpile is classified as hazardous, it must be transported to a hazardous landfill. Hazardous materials and refuse must be kept in closed containers that are covered and utilize secondary containment, not directly on soil. If the stockpile is non-hazardous, it can be sent to a Class Three (3) landfill.
- e. During the project rainy season, cover non-active soil stockpiles and contain them within temporary perimeter sediment barriers, such as berms, dikes, silt fences, or sandbag barriers. A soil stabilization measure may be used in lieu of cover.
- f. Implement appropriate erosion control measures during debris removal and provide final site stabilization after debris removal is completed.

Debris Removal Requirements to Solid Waste Disposal Facilities

Burn waste/ash must at a minimum be disposed of at a Class III disposal facility with a liner approved by the Regional Water Control Board to accept the waste, and any characterization requirements of the disposal site must be met before transportation to such site. An approved hauler appropriately licensed for the material transported will need to perform such work, and the material must be wetted and burrito wrapped (CalRecycle protocol) and tarped for transport and ultimate disposal. Contractors/haulers failing to adhere to this standard may have their material rejected at the disposal facility and/or a fine imposed. **Asbestos transport and disposal is not authorized by this exemption.**

Dust Control Guidelines:

- Property owners or their contractors should look to provide water or an approved dust palliative, or both, to prevent dust nuisance at each site. Dust resulting from performance of the work should be controlled at all times.
- Each area of ash and debris to be removed must be pre-watered 48 to 72 hours in advance of the removal. Hoses with a fine spray nozzle are recommended. The water must be applied in a manner that does not generate runoff. Engineering controls for storm water discharges must be in place prior to dust control operations.
- All loads shall be covered with a tarp; this includes metal debris. Ash and debris loads shall be fully encapsulated with a tarp (“burrito wrap” method). Concrete loads are exempt from a tarp provided the loads are wetted prior to leaving. If concrete loads generate dust, then the loads must be wetted and covered.
- All waste material that is not unloaded at the end of each workday should be consolidated, sufficiently wetted, and/or covered to prevent the offsite migration of contaminants.
- All visibly dry disturbed soil surface areas of operation should be watered to minimize dust emissions during performance of work.
- Speeds must be reduced when driving on unpaved roadways.
- Procedures must be implemented to prevent or minimize dirt, soil, or ash contaminating

roadways, neighboring parcels, or creating an airborne health hazard. The use of blower devices, dry rotary brushes, or brooms for removal of carryout and track out on public roads is strictly prohibited.

Vehicle and Road Safety

If removal activities on property owners' parcels will create a roadway blockage or hinder traffic patterns, property owners or their contractors are responsible for obtaining any required local permits and shall post all warning signs, as required by local ordinances. As there may be many contractors actively working on remediation efforts in the burn area, it is in property owners' best interests to identify removal and remediation efforts in adjacent areas that could impact the ability to locate, park, or transport equipment and materials.

Well and Septic Guidelines

Well Safety

- Contact Permit Sonoma at 707-565-1900 for water safety questions, well location, to obtain information on well repair permits or if you will be rewiring electrical lines to your well.
- Identify wells and water tanks on the property and take steps to protect them during debris removal.

Septic Systems

- Contact Permit Sonoma at 707-565-1900 for questions regarding your system location. Any electrical work will require a permit from Permit Sonoma.
- Identify septic tank and leach field locations and take steps to protect them during debris removal. Any immediate hazard involving the septic tank or septic system shall be mitigated prior to debris removal.

Soil Testing and Screening Criteria Guidelines

Soil testing and screening criteria are not required under this exemption, however, property owners must meet any waste characterization requirements of recipient disposal sites prior to transporting waste.

Resources for Disposal and Recycling:

Please see Appendix C and D of the alternative cleanup guidelines for a list of disposal and recycling facilities that may be available during your cleanup.