

CAL FIRE

NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

San Luis Obispo Unit / San Luis Obispo County Fire

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FIRE SEASON BEGINS

DOORYARD BURNING SUSPENDED

FIRE PREPAREDNESS EXERCISE

San Luis Obispo – Due to unseasonably dry conditions following record or near-record low winter/spring precipitation, CAL FIRE/San Luis Obispo County Fire will increase staffing of fire engines and the Paso Robles Air Attack Base for this fire season. On Monday, April 29, fifty seasonal firefighters are joining regular firefighting forces to staff ten additional wildland fire engines. On Monday, May 13, ten additional firefighters will staff two additional fire engines. Also, on May 13, Paso Robles Air Attack Base will be staffed with an air tactical aircraft and one air tanker. One additional air tanker will be staffed approximately two weeks later. For weather and fuels information please review the [National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#).

Six hand crews at Cuesta Conservation Camp and three hand crews at Camarillo Fire Center will remain available for emergency response. These CAL FIRE hand crews are staffed in cooperation with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the California Conservation Corps. CAL FIRE will be conducting its annual Fire Preparedness Exercise on Tuesday, April 30, 2013, at the Vierra Ranch just south of the intersection of Santa Lucia Road and El Monte Road in West Atascadero. An operational briefing will be held at 9:00 AM and the exercise will start at 9:30 AM. This exercise consists of strenuous hiking, fire line construction and safety exercises to maintain qualified status as Type 1 fire crews for emergency response throughout the State of California. Crews have been training several months for this exercise. April 29, 2013 also marks the end of the open burn season. Burning authorized under Dooryard Burn Permits issued by the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) will be suspended until the end of fire season. In addition to an [APCD Burn Permit](#), all other

types of burning will now require a [CAL FIRE Burn Permit](#) to be issued by the local [CAL FIRE facility](#).

Residents within [State Responsibility Areas](#) are required to maintain 100 feet of defensible space around all habitable structures on their property. In addition to maintaining adequate defensible space, residents are encouraged to be vigilant and avoid activities that could spark unwanted fires such as mowing dry vegetation during warm, dry, or windy weather. Fire Chief Robert Lewin stated, *“Our men and women are now prepared for fire season, we now need the residents to make sure they are”*.

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