

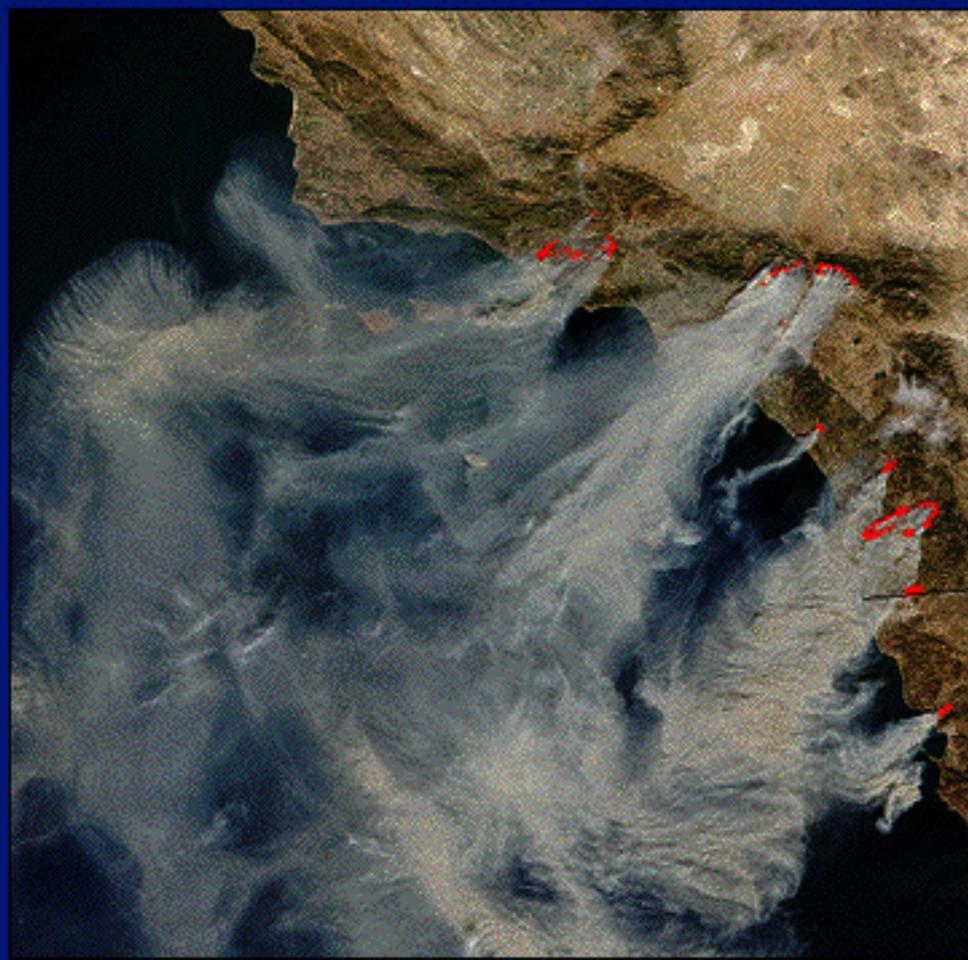
Unit 3-2 The Guidelines

Question: How does 30+2003=100?



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Answer: 30' clearance in 2003 = 100'
clearance in 2006



Unit 3-2 The Guidelines

- Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on September 23, 2004 signed into law Senate Bill 1369.
- This bill became effective January 1, 2005.
- A set of "Performance Based Regulations" were developed by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF), called the "General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space", and adopted by the BOF on February 8, 2006.
- Guidelines developed to be simple and flexible, as-well-as comprehensive and prescriptive.



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- SB 1369 amended Public Resources Code 4291:
 - Increases minimum clearance requirement from 30' to 100'.
 - Provides for state law, or local ordinance, rule, or regulation to specify distances greater than 100' or more restrictive requirements.
 - Allows insurance companies to require home/building owners to maintain firebreaks greater than 100'.



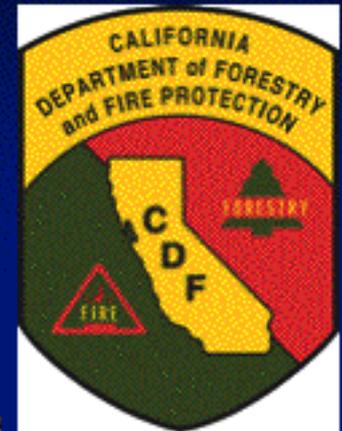
Unit 3-2 The Guidelines

General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space



State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF)
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Adopted by BOF on February 8, 2006
Pending Filing with Office of Administrative Law



Purpose of Performance Based Guidelines

- Changes to PRC 4291 expand "defensible space" clearance to 100'.
- "Defensible space" provides firefighters a safe working environment to protect structures from encroaching wildfires.
- "Defensible space" reduces the potential of a structure fire from escaping to the surrounding wildland and neighborhood.
- Law applies to any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or any land that is covered with flammable material, and located within a State Responsibility Area.



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- Guidelines consider that terrain, climate and vegetation interact to affect fire behavior.
- ...such as, steep terrain, larger and denser fuels, fuels that are highly volatile, and in locations subject to frequent fires.
- Greater fire hazards may require more clearing.



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- Usually means reducing the amount of fuel, especially dead vegetation, around the structure, providing separation between fuels, and by trimming & pruning retained fuels.
- It does not mean cutting down all trees and shrubs, or creating a bare ring of earth across the property is required.



- Responsibility is limited to 100 feet away

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- Must comply with all federal, state or local environmental protection laws and obtain permits when necessary.
- ...such as, threatened and endangered species, water quality, air quality, and archeological resources.
- Larger trees removed for fuel reduction may require permits from CDF.
- Also, many counties and towns require tree removal permits when cutting trees



Property Owners Must Still...

- Remove any portion of a tree that extends within 10 ft of a chimney or stovepipes.
- Maintain all roofs free of leaves, needles, or dead vegetative growth
- Maintain any tree adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood.



Authority to inspect property

- PRC 4119: The department, or its duly authorized agent, shall enforce the state forest and fire laws. The department may inspect all properties, except the interior of dwellings, subject to the state forest and fire laws, for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with such laws.
- Inspectors to use common sense and professional judgment.



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Definitions

- Defensible space: Area providing the key point of defense from an approaching wildfire or escaping structure fire.
- Aerial fuels: Vegetation above surface fuels.
- Building or structure: Any structure used for support or shelter of any use or occupancy (I.e. a building with a roof).



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- Fuel Vegetative Material: live or dead, which is combustible during normal summer weather. It does not include fences, decks, woodpiles, trash, etc.
- Homeowner: Any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or any land that is covered with flammable material, and located within a State Responsibility Area.



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- Ladder Fuels: Fuels that can carry a fire vertically.
- Lean, Clean and Green Zone: From 0 to 30 feet from the structure (or to the property line, whichever is less).
- Reduced Fuel Zone: From 30 to 100 feet away from the structure (or to the property line, whichever is less).
- Surface fuels: Surface litter, such as leaves or needles, grasses, low and



Fuel Treatment Guidelines

- Inspectors will be following the BOF Guidelines , which are designed to comply with the requirements of PRC 4291.
- Properties with structures must comply with Guideline Sections 1., 2., 3., and either 4a or 4b.



General Guidelines

- **1.** Maintain a firebreak by removing and clearing away all flammable vegetation 0-30' of each structure. "Lean, Clean and Green Zone"
- Exception...Single specimens of trees or other vegetation may be retained provided they are well-spaced, well-pruned, AND avoids spread of fire to other vegetation or to structure.



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- **2.** Dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels within the Reduced Fuel Zone (30-100') shall be removed.
- Leaves and needles shall be permitted to a depth of 3 inches.
- Intended to eliminate vegetation that is completely dead or with substantial amounts of dead branches or leaves/needles that would readily burn.



- **3.** Down logs or stumps anywhere within 100 feet of a structure, when embedded in the soil, may be retained when isolated from other vegetation.
- Occasional (approximately one per acre*) standing dead trees that are well-spaced from other vegetation and which will not fall on structures or on roadways may be retained. (* equals one snag per 100' zone)

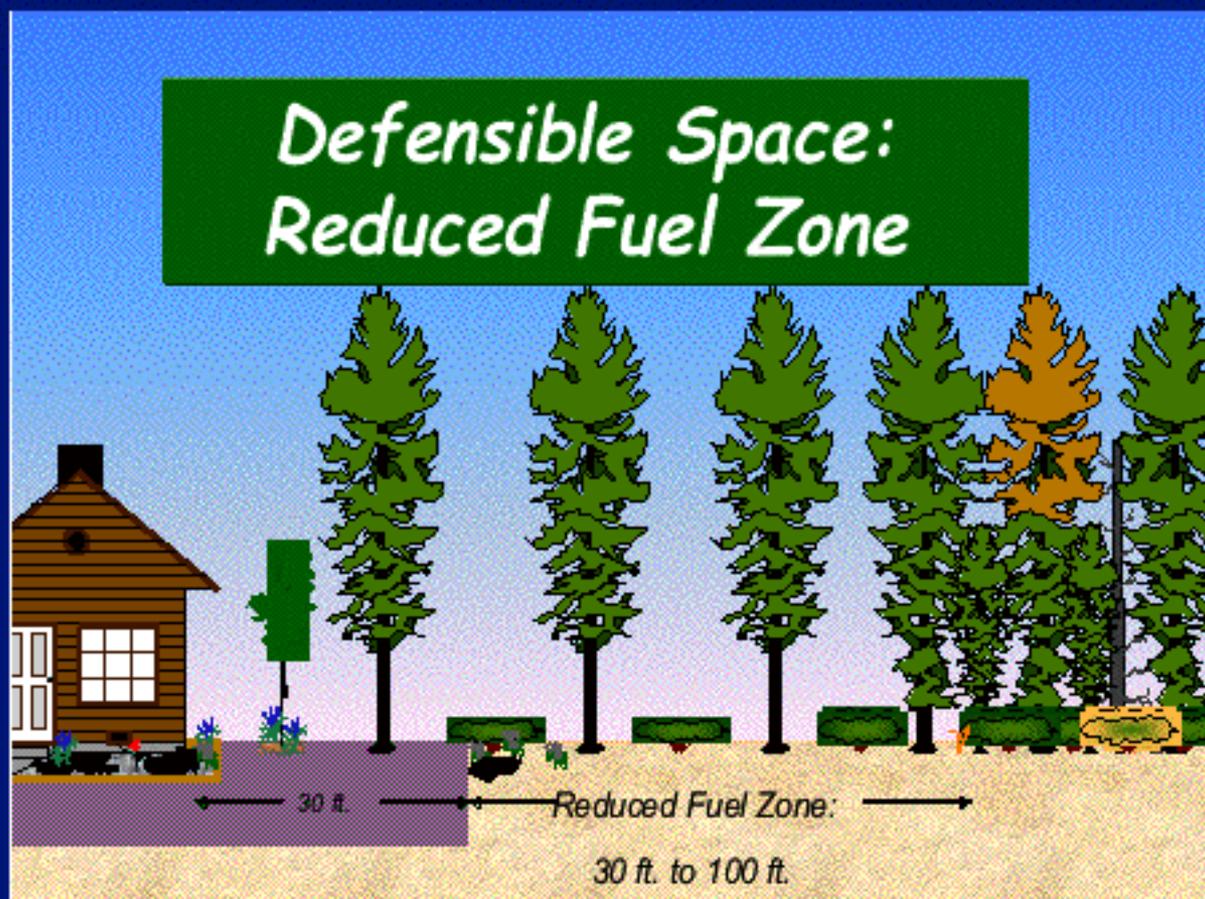


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- 4. Within the Reduced Fuel Zone (30-100') Guideline 4a. OR 4b. shall be implemented.
- Combinations of the methods defined in 4a and 4b may be acceptable, as long as the intent of these guidelines is met.



4a. Reduced Fuel Zone: Fuel Separation



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- Clearance between fuels will range from 4 feet to 40 feet both horizontally and vertically.
- Clearance distances between fuels depend on the slope, vegetation size, vegetation type (brush, grass, trees), and other fuel characteristics (fuel compaction, chemical content, etc.).
- Greater fire hazards may require greater separation.
- Groups of vegetation less than 10 feet



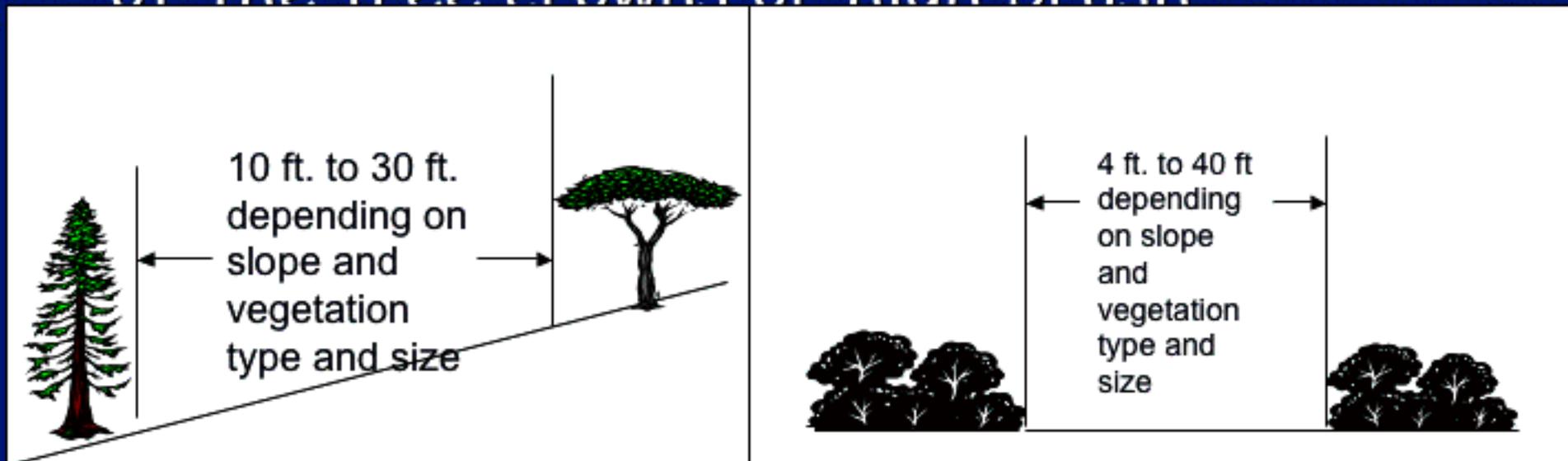
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- Grasses within the Reduced Fuel Zone not exceed 4 inches in height
- May keep grass up to 18 inches in height where necessary to prevent erosion.



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- Horizontal clearance between aerial fuels, measured from the outside edge of the tree crowns or high brush

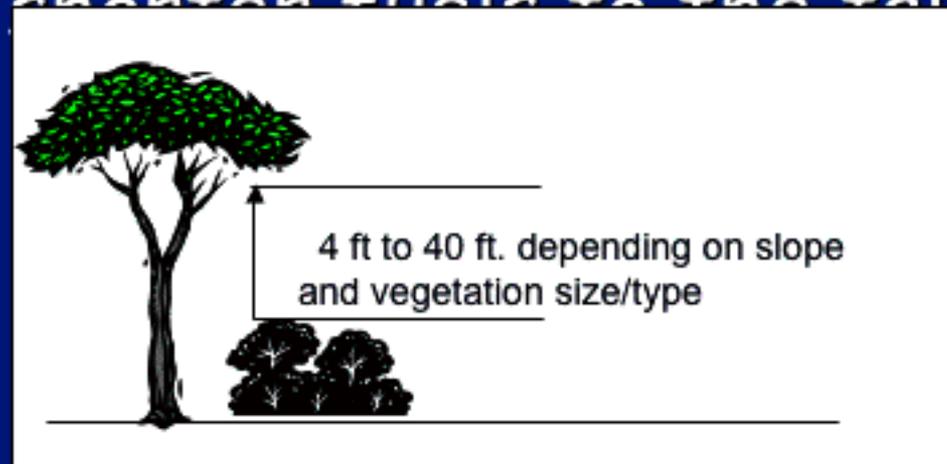


Trees

Shrubs

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- Vertical clearance between lower limbs of aerial fuels and the nearest surface fuels.
- Vertical clearance removes *ladder fuels* and helps prevent a fire from moving from the *shorter fuels* to the taller fuels.



Vertical clearance between aerial fuels



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Plant Spacing Guidelines

Guidelines are designed to break the continuity of fuels and be used as a "rule of thumb" for achieving compliance with Regulation 14 CCR 1299.

| Trees | Minimum horizontal space from edge of one tree canopy to the edge of the next | |
|------------------|--|---------|
| | Slope | Spacing |
| | 0% to 20 % | 10 feet |
| | 20% to 40% | 20 feet |
| Greater than 40% | 30 feet | |

| Shrubs | Minimum horizontal space between edges of shrub | |
|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| | Slope | Spacing |
| | 0% to 20 % | 2 times the height of the shrub |
| | 20% to 40% | 4 times the height of the shrub |
| Greater than 40% | 6 times the height of the shrub | |

| Vertical Space | Minimum vertical space between top of shrub and bottom of lower tree branches: 3 times the height of the shrub |
|----------------|---|
|----------------|---|



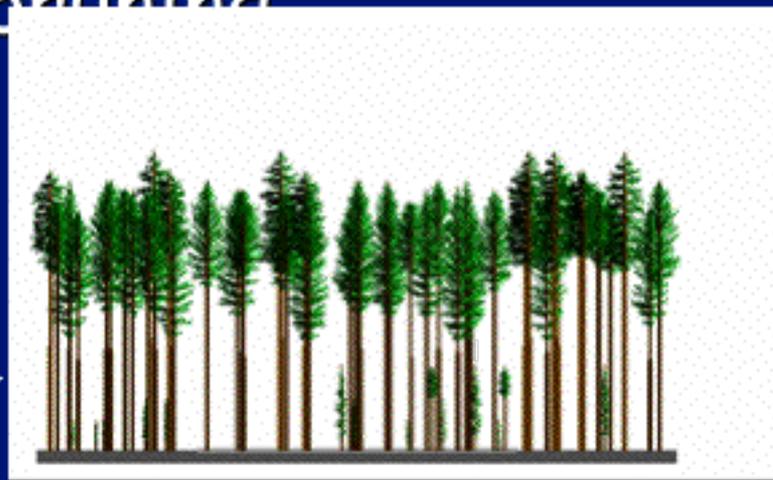
4b. Reduced Fuel Zone: Defensible Space with Continuous Tree Canopy

- Guide used to achieve "defensible space" while retaining a stand of larger trees with a continuous tree canopy
- Remove all surface fuels greater than 4 inches in height.
- Single specimens may be retained provided they are well-spaced, well pruned, and creates a condition that avoids the spread of fire.



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- Remove ("prune") lower limbs of trees to at least 6 feet, up to 15 feet, (or the lower 1/3 branches for small trees).
- Greater fire hazards will require greater pruning.



Prune branches
at least 6 ft.

Clear surface fuels

Defensible Space retaining continuous trees



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Unit 3-2 The Guidelines



Citations and Penalties

- Compliance Orders issued by fire department inspectors (education phase advising owner of what needs to be done). These are not tickets!!!
- PRC 4291 allows the fire department to issue citations.
- 1st Violation: Infraction punishable by fine \$100-\$500.
- 2nd Violation w/in 5 yrs of 1st Violation: Infraction punishable by fine \$250-\$500.
- 3rd Violation w/in 5 yrs of 1st and 2nd violation: \$500 fine OR cover costs for contractor to abate.



Defensible Space "final exam"



This is looking west from the area of Tavern Road in Alpine as the fire jumps Interstate 8 and marches up through the communities Harbison Canyon and Crest.



What we want to avoid...



What we want to see...



Local Contact Information

- Idyllwild Fire Protection District
(951)659-2153
- USFS/Idyllwild (Pine Wood, Alandale, Mtn. Center, Apple Canyon, Hurkey Creek, and Bonita Vista)
(951) 659-2117
- CDF-Pine Cove (951)659-2732
- CDF-Garner Valley (951)659-5353
- CDF-Foresters (951)659-3337

