



**VENTURA COUNTY
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

May 12, 2025

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Zone 0 Advisory Committee

DEFENSIBLE SPACE & ZONE 0 PRESENTATION

**LARRY WILLIAMS, VCFD
ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL
(RETIRED)**

MOUNTAIN FIRE



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MOUNTAIN FIRE

- **11/06/24 at 8:51 AM**
- **19,904** – Total acres
- **243** - Structures destroyed
- **0** – Deaths
- NWS – Potentially Damaging Winds event forecasted.
- Wind speeds same as Palisades Fire.
- Fire spotted 2.5 miles across an agriculture valley and ignited brush and homes in the Camarillo Area.



MOUNTAIN FIRE - AFTERMATH



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PALISADES FIRE



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PALISADES FIRE

- **1/07/25 at 10:30 AM**
- **23,448** – Total acres
- **6,837** - Structures destroyed
- **9** - Deaths



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PALISADES FIRE - AFTERMATH



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EATON FIRE



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EATON FIRE

- **1/07/25 at 6:18 PM**
- **14,021** – Total acres
- **9,418** - Structures destroyed
- **25** - Deaths



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EATON FIRE - AFTERMATH



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Eaton Fire 2025

PREVENTION EFFORTS

Defensible Space

- VCFD's Fire Hazard Reduction Program is nationally recognized for reducing the risk to homes and businesses
- First enacted in 1929 under County Ordinance (30 feet)
- Expanded in 1931 to include adjacent parcels within the required clearance zone from structures.



PREVENTION EFFORTS

Defensible Space

- 1950 the clearance zone was expanded to 60 feet.
- 1991 expanded to 100 feet.
- Notices sent to about 19,000 properties in April, outlining the minimum vegetation management requirements
- Residents have been incredibly supportive: More than 99 percent complete the vegetation management



BRUSH CLEARANCE



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BRUSH CLEARANCE



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PREVENTION EFFORTS – ZONE 0

- April 2019 VCFD issued Standard 515 which introduced the 0-5 foot zone around buildings as an ember resistant zone. It also set requirements for vegetation height, width, and spacing in Zones 1 & 2.
- As a result of fires statewide since 2019, including the Mountain Fire and the LA Fires, and full-scale testing of exposure fires adjacent to buildings, VCFD issued revised Standard 515:



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PREVENTION EFFORTS – ZONE 0

- **Non-Combustible Zone 0 for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings.** Effective March 1, 2025, fuels, including combustible materials and vegetation, are prohibited in Zone 0 for all new buildings, additions to existing buildings, installation of new landscape, and refurbishment of existing landscape areas.

Additional Requirements in Zone 0:

- **Trees.** New and existing tree canopies are prohibited within 10 feet of new buildings, including the addition portion to existing buildings.

Exception for Protected Oak Trees. Existing protected oak trees shall be trimmed to provide a minimum 5-foot clearance above the roof and 5 feet to the side of any new building, or the addition portion to an existing building.



PREVENTION EFFORTS – ZONE 0

- Landscaped roofs are prohibited.
- Vegetation on and underneath decks is prohibited.
- Other combustible materials underneath any deck, not part of the deck structure itself, shall be removed.
- No new window planting boxes shall be attached to the structure.
- Artificial or synthetic grass is prohibited within Zone 0.
- Vines and climbing plants are not allowed on structures, including decks, patio / shade structures, and any fences within 5 feet of a building.
- No Firewood.
- All fencing and gates shall be non-combustible.



ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ZONE 0 - LANDSCAPE



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COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS

- Decks



- Sheds



COMBUSTIBLE FENCING



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COMBUSTIBLE FENCING



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COMBUSTIBLE FENCING – 5 FT



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COMBUSTIBLE FENCING – 5 FT



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QUESTIONS?



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