

Fire Hazard Prevention Exemption (AB 2420)

Silvicultural and Operational Requirements

- Decrease the horizontal and vertical fuel continuity
- Increase the average diameter of trees in the stand
- Size must be less than 300 acres
- Tractors are limited to slope angles less than 50%;
 - No construction of new roads on slopes over 40%;
 - No tractors on known slides or unstable areas;
 - No heavy equipment within standard WLPZ's;
 - No disturbance of known rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal sites;
 - No timber operations within the buffer of a sensitive species;
 - and any restrictions associated with a Special Treatment Area
- If within 500' of a legally permitted structure or in an area prioritized as a shade fuel break in a community wildfire protection plan, then only trees less than 24" in diameter at stump height, measured at 8" above the ground, may be cut
 - If not, then only trees less than 18" diameter at stump height may be cut
- If the preharvest dominant and codominant trees are less than 14" diameter at breast height (dbh) then a minimum of 100 trees/acre over 4" dbh must be retained on Site I, II, and III lands and 75 trees on Site IV and V lands
- Stocking levels must be consistent with the maximum sustained production of high quality timber products consisting of healthy and vigorous dominant and codominant trees
- Stocking levels must be greater than 125 sq. ft./acre of basal area on Site I, 100 sq. ft./acre on Site II and III, 75 sq. ft./acre on Site IV, and 50 sq. ft./acre on Site V
- Treat surface fuels (logging slash, debris, low brush, and deadwood) to achieve an average 4' flame length under average severe fire weather on 80% of the treated area
- Ladder and surface fuels must be removed to achieve at least 8' clearance from the base of the live crown to the top of the surface fuels
- Minimum post-treatment canopy closure of dominant and codominant trees shall be 60%
- Treat fuels within 120 days from the start of the operations, except for burning operations, which shall be completed by April 1 of the year following surface fuel creation

Emergency Fuel Hazard Reduction

These are “emergency” rules that provide for the removal of trees for a variety of reasons (dead, dying, fire hazard, road repair, etc.) and include rules very similar to the Fire Hazard Prevention Exemption. Differences between the two that would affect landowners are as follows, otherwise all silvicultural and operational requirements are the same:

- Increase the average diameter of trees >8” in diameter in the stand
- Must be within ¼ mile from a legally permitted structure and have densities greater than 1 structure per 20 acres. If not, then within 500’ of a legal structure
 - or within 500’ on either side of a public or federal road;
 - within 500’ on either side of private road providing access to legal structures;
 - within 500’ on either side of a ridge or mainline haul road approved by a public fire agency in a fire prevention plan as necessary for fire prevention or evacuation;
 - within 500’ of infrastructure facilities such as transmission lines or water conduits
- Trees harvested must be less than 30” inside bark stump diameter
- Evaluate and incorporate fish, wildlife, and plant species considerations into the project. Examples include retention of large woody debris and snags, vegetation screening for wildlife cover and visual aesthetics (consultation with California Department of Fish and Game is recommended)

Removal of Fire Hazard Trees within 150’ of a Structure Exemption

This exemption provides for the removal and sale of trees within 150’ of a legal structure for the purposes of reducing fire hazard. New regulations regarding vegetation adjacent to buildings require the removal of potentially fire-spreading vegetation within 100’ of a building or structure. This exemption may be used to reduce costs associated with removing trees. Requirements are as follows:

- Tractors are limited to slope angles less than 50%;
 - No construction of new roads on slopes over 40%;
 - No tractors on known slides or unstable areas;
 - No heavy equipment within standard WLPZ’s;
 - No disturbance of known rare, threatened, or endangered plant or animal sites;
 - No timber operations within the buffer of a sensitive species;
 - and any restrictions associated with a Special Treatment Area
- All surface fuels larger than 1” in diameter, including logging slash, deadwood, and branches and brush killed by the logging, must be removed within 45 days from the start of timber operations