



NEWS

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Permissive burn periods for orchard pruning and attrition, and forest management fires open

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is announcing that the open burning seasons for orchard pruning and attrition, and for forest management fires will begin on Tuesday, November 1, 2011.

The permissive burn period for both types of fires lasts from November 1, 2011, through April 30, 2012.

Open burning is regulated because of the smoke impact on air quality. Certain fires for agricultural purposes, flood control, fire training and the prevention of fire hazards, among other purposes, are allowed when weather conditions are favorable, many of them during specified periods throughout the year. Each day of the year is designated as either a BURN or a NO BURN day, and permissible fires can only be set during their established burn season on a designated BURN day.

Orchard pruning and attrition fires are agricultural fires set for the purpose of disposal of periodic prunings and attrition losses from fruit trees, nut trees, vineyards and cane fruits. These fires must be set or allowed by the public fire official having jurisdiction. They must be necessary to maintain and continue the growing of the fruit trees, vineyards and cane fruits as a gainful occupation. In order to qualify as a gainful occupation, proof of gross profit or loss as evidenced by tax receipts, sales slips or other such documents must be producible. Notification of these burns must be sent to the Air District prior to burning.

Forest management fires are also categorized as agricultural fires. These fires are set for the purpose of removing forest debris and for other forest management activities. They must be set or allowed by a public fire official having jurisdiction. Notification of these burns must be sent to the Air District prior to burning.

Open burning requirements apply to the entire nine-county Bay Area, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, southwestern Solano and southern Sonoma counties.

The Air District's open burning regulation (Regulation 5) is available at www.baaqmd.gov. Select "Rules and Regulations" in the drop-down menu under the "Work" portal. Open burn information is also available on the Air District's toll-free number at 1-800-HELP AIR (435-7247).

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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