



CLEARLAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT

14050 Olympic Drive, Clearlake, CA 95422

Andrew White | Chief of Police

Fire Hazard Compliance Facts and Trim Guidelines

The Code Enforcement Bureau enforces the vegetation and fire hazard ordinance throughout the year. Investigations are initiated upon receipt of public complaints or by observation of a violation by a Code Enforcement Officer.

We begin more active enforcement of overgrown dead vegetation each spring and continue well into the fall until the rainy season is underway. Fire hazard abatement is considered "essential service" and may be performed by property owners or hired services regardless of public health conditions.

Basic guidelines for fire hazard abatement are as follows:

- Grasses and weeds must be trimmed to 4" in height or shorter. Repeat as needed throughout the dry months.
- Trees with low hanging branches must be trimmed to 4 feet or higher from the ground. Trim new growth shoots from tree trunks to provide the minimum 4-foot clearance from the ground. Standing dead trees shall be removed.
- All species of oaks in the City of Clearlake are protected and require a permit for complete removal or topping.
- Shrubs should be trimmed so that no foliage is touching the ground. Standing dead shrubs shall be removed.
- All tree, shrub and brush trimmings on the ground, piles of leaves, etc. must be removed and properly disposed of. If chipping on site, chippings may be left provided they are spread evenly across the property with no piles.
- The requirement for large parcels of one acre or more is limited to a 40-ft firebreak perimeter.
- Once a property has been abated, we also recommend that it be checked periodically for re-growth to maintain compliance at all times as required by law.

Within the City of Clearlake, any property found to be in violation of the vegetation fire hazard code is subject to an immediate Administrative Citation of \$100.00 per violation without prior notice.

Each and every day that a violation continues is a new and separate offense. The property is required to become compliant immediately. A compliance inspection of the property may be performed approximately 14 days from the date of issue of the Notice of Violation or Administrative Citation. If the property is in compliance upon inspection, the case can be resolved. The Citation must still be paid on or before the due date to avoid further penalties and consequences.

Once a Citation is issued, the fine is due and payable not later than 21 days from the date of issue. There is no grace period. Unpaid Citations are subject to a late payment penalty of 50%.

If the compliance inspection results in non-compliance, a second Administrative Citation may be issued. Continued failure to abate may result in additional Citations. Continued failure to pay Citations by the due dates will result in penalties of 50% being added to the amount of each outstanding Citation. Citations may be appealed in writing. Refer to the instructions on the back of the Citation.

We are taking fire prevention in our city very seriously and we encourage all property owners to do their part to ensure that their property is part of the fire safety solutions here in Clearlake. Thank you for your cooperation!

