COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
(323) 881-2401

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

March 24, 2009

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

2009 BRUSH CLEARANCE REFEREE'S HEARING REPORT

As authorized by the Los Angeles County Fire Code and approved by your Board on January 13, 2009, public hearings were conducted by the Assistant Chief, Brush Clearance Section, County of Los Angeles Fire Department, acting as Referee, to receive protests against the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's 2009 order to abate hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation, to include native and ornamental vegetation, on improved parcels in Los Angeles County. As stated in the legal notice sent to each owner of record, the hearings were held at 9:30 A.M., in the offices of the Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures, at 12300 Lower Azusa Road, Arcadia, California, on February 24, 2009; and at 335 A East Avenue K-6, Lancaster, California, on February 25, 2009.

Three improved property owners attended the public hearings. During the hearings, the property owners received individual consultation from Fire Department personnel. Appropriate action was taken as necessary to address their inquiry. We are not aware of any individual that wishes to present objections to your Board at this time.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Accept this hearing report.

2. Order the County of Los Angeles Fire Department to enforce the removal of hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation, to include native and ornamental vegetation, on improved parcels in Los Angeles County.

Very truly yours,

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN

for

PMF:kj

Attachment

c: William T Fujioka
Vicky Santana
Randi Tahara
Joseph Charney
Rick Velasquez
Sussy Nemer
County Counsel
Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES)

KEVIN T. JOHNSON, ASSISTANT CHIEF, FORESTRY, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT, being duly sworn says: That on or before the 2nd of February, 2009, he mailed, or caused to be mailed, 38,627 "Annual Brush Clearance Notices" to the owners of each of the properties described in the Declaration List, as their names and residential addresses and a description of the property in question appear from the last equalized assessment roll, or as known to the clerk, which notices request owners to destroy hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation, to include native and ornamental vegetation, and set the 24th and 25th day of February, 2009, as the dates upon which owners of said property may attend a hearing of the Brush Clearance Referee, when their objections will be heard and given due consideration. Annexed is a true and correct copy of such notice.

I have personal knowledge of the foregoing, and if called upon could competently testify thereto.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Kevin T. Johnson, Assistant Chief, Forestry

WITNESSED BY:

This 10TH day of March, 2009.

Karen Jones, Mgmt. Secretary III

Dear Improved Property Owner:

This is not a citation or summons. This is the first brush clearance notice and a reminder that the County of Los Angeles Fire Department will be conducting annual brush clearance inspections within the next few months.

The County Fire Code states that parcel owners are responsible throughout the year for the maintenance of all brush, flammable vegetation (native and/or ornamental), and other combustible materials situated on their property.

General clearing requirements are listed on the reverse side of this notice. Please review these clearing requirements and take appropriate action prior to the annual inspection date for your area. Abatement of potential or existing hazards prior to the inspection saves the Fire Department and yourself valuable money and time and insures a safer community.

Inspections are scheduled to begin April 1 in the Antelope Valley, June 1 in the Coastal Area, and May 1 in all other areas. If hazardous fire conditions exist on your property at the time of inspection, you will be issued an Official Inspection Report which will indicate existing violations and provide specific clearing instructions and a compliance deadline.

Failure to comply with the Official Inspection Report issued at the time of the inspection will result in the imposition of a $200 administrative penalty and an additional $648 special assessment on your annual tax bill as item CO FIRE ABMT ENF to recover the County of Los Angeles Fire Department costs related to the enforcement of the Fire Code. Additionally, if your parcel is inspected or cleared by the Agricultural Commissioner, an inspection fee of $46.10 or the clearing costs will be placed on your annual tax bill as item LA CO HAZ ABATE.

In most cases, it is more cost effective to do the work yourself or to hire a vendor to do the work. A vendor list is available at your local fire station.

For additional information regarding specific clearing requirements, contact your local fire station or the Brush Clearance Unit at (626) 969-2375.

NOTICE TO DESTROY HAZARDOUS BRUSH, DRY GRASS, WEEDS, COMBUSTIBLE GROWTH OR FLAMMABLE VEGETATION TO INCLUDE NATIVES AND ORNAMENTALS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ON JANUARY 13, 2009 THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Passed or will pass a resolution declaring that hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation to include native and ornamental vegetation where growing upon or in front of said improved property as specifically described by parcel number in the resolution, to be a potential fire hazard or nuisance which, upon inspection by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department is verified to be an existing hazard or nuisance and violation of the County Fire Code pertaining to clearance of brush and vegetative growth, must be removed and the nuisance abated by the County authorities and the cost of removal assessed upon the land. In addition, the Board of Supervisors authorized and directed the County of Los Angeles Fire Department and the Agricultural Commissioner to recover their costs related to the enforcement of the fire code. All property owners having objection to the removal of brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation including natives and ornamentals are hereby notified that they may attend a brush clearance referee meeting (1) in the Antelope Valley at the **LOS ANGELES COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BLDG., 335 A EAST AVE. K-6, LANCASTER, CA 93535, ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2009 AT 9:30 A. M.** or **(2) A MEETING OF THE**

BRUSH CLEARANCE REFEREE AT 12300 LOWER AZUSA RD, ARCADIA, CA 91006-5872, ON FEBRUARY 24, 2009 AT 9:30 A.M.UNTIL NOON PROTESTS WHICH ARE NOT RESOLVED WILL BE SENT BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

when their objections will be heard and given due consideration. If the property owner does not want to present objections to the proposed removal of hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, combustible growth or flammable vegetation, or the recovery of enforcement and abatement costs, he/she need not appear at the above mentioned meeting(s).

ASSESSORS I.D. NUMBER			THIS NOTICE DATED
MAPBOOK	PAGE	PARCEL	02-02-09

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

FIRE CHIEF

SEQNM 183

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT
PREVENTION BUREAU
BRUSH CLEARANCE UNIT
605 N. ANGELENO AVENUE
AZUSA, CA 91702-2904
(626) 969-2375

IMPROVED PROPERTY ANNUAL BRUSH CLEARANCE NOTICE 2009

BRUSH CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Thousands of homes are in serious danger of destruction by fire because of their proximity to brush-covered areas. Homes with wood shake roofs, wood siding, decks, patio covers or exposed eaves are particularly vulnerable to the spread of fire. Despite efforts by firefighters, wildland fires fanned by strong winds, can destroy homes. It is your legal responsibility to take the necessary action to clear vegetation around any given structures. A fire safe landscape creates a defensible space to help protect against approaching wildfires.

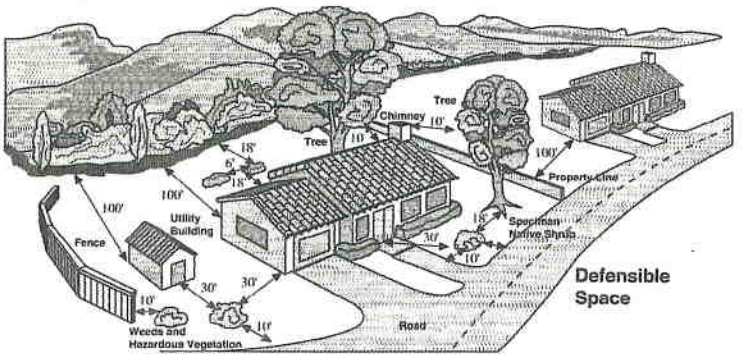
1. All flammable vegetation identified as a fire hazard by the inspection officer shall be mowed or cut to a stubble height of 3 inches, for 30 feet around any structure or 50 feet in high hazard areas (County of Los Angeles Fire Code 317.2.2(2), 317.2.3).
2. Create a firebreak for the next 70 feet, for a total of 100 feet, around any structure by clearing, trimming, thinning, cutting back and removing flammable vegetation. For high hazard areas, this distance can be increased to a maximum of 200 feet (County of Los Angeles Fire Code 317.2.2(3), 317.2.3).
3. Single specimens of trees, ornamental shrubbery, or ground covers are permissible, provided that they do not form a means of transmitting fire from native growth to the structure (County of Los Angeles Fire Code 317.2.2(2)). It is recommended that specimens shall be spaced a minimum of 15 feet or 3 times their diameter from other specimens, structures or surrounding native brush.
4. Access roads shall be maintained with a minimum of 10 feet of brush clearance on each side. Fire access roads shall have an unobstructed vertical clearance clear to the sky. Trees overhanging fire access roads shall be maintained to provide adequate vertical clearance (County of Los Angeles Fire Code 317.10, 503.1.1 through 503.6).
5. Provide a minimum of 3 feet of brush clearance around all fire hydrants (County of Los Angeles Fire Code 508.5.5).
6. It is strongly recommended that all trees and shrubs shall be maintained free of dead wood and litter. Trees and shrubs may be required to be trimmed up from the ground 1/3 of their height.
7. Trees are best trimmed during dormancy or during the winter months. Care should be taken when trimming trees during the spring as this is the nesting season for many species of birds.

All plants will burn under extreme fire weather conditions. Fire resistant plants burn at a relatively low intensity, at slow rates of spread and with short flame lengths. To best protect your home from fire, it is recommended that fire resistant plants be used when landscaping. A list of these plants can be obtained through the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Brush Clearance Unit, telephone number (626) 969-2375.

BRUSH CLEARANCE MAINTENANCE IS A YEAR-ROUND RESPONSIBILITY

MINIMUM DISTANCES REQUIRED

EXTRA HAZARDOUS AREAS MAY REQUIRE 200 FEET OF CLEARANCE



NOTE: Small lots may make these clearance distances impossible. You are only responsible to clear up to your property lines. Clearance of property adjacent to your lot is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.

IF YOU ARE UNCLEAR AS TO THE CLEARANCE REQUESTED, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FIRE STATION