

CRR POLICY 1317: Chainsaw and Fuel Powered Equipment Use During Fire Restrictions



Created: April 23, 2018 Revised: June 2, 2020 Effective Date: Immediate
Community Risk Reduction Division – 928-204-8926

During times of elevated fire danger it may become necessary to enact fire restrictions to lessen the possibility un-wanted fire starts. One such limitation is the restriction of chainsaws and other fuel powered equipment during certain hours. This restriction is put in place by the United States Forest Service and applies only to land that is managed by the Federal Government. It is important to note that these lands are typically in remote areas, with no water supply, no fire breaks and the vegetation is not manicured, cultivated or cared for in a manner consistent with good landscaping practices.

These restrictions may interfere with property owners, licensed landscapers, and certified arborists and foresters conducting operations such as removal and maintenance of vegetation to promote healthy plants, removal of accumulated detritus, fire prescribed cutting or utility easement right of way maintenance which works to lessen fuel load and increase fire safety around structures and populated areas.

It is for the reasons outlined above that the Fire Marshal has determined that this type of work on private property does not require a variance or permit from this office. The Fire Marshal encourages anyone performing this work to follow accepted safety practices and to limit the work to the hours specified below when temperatures are lower and relative humidity is typically higher. It is also worth noting that should a fire occur due to the actions or negligence of persons performing this type of work, the operator of such equipment may be criminally and civilly liable for any damage caused.

Persons using a chainsaw or other powered equipment on private property should follow the recommended safety practices outlined below;

- 1) Perform all work before 9:00 am or after 8:00 pm when relative humidity is higher and temperatures are lower. Commercial operators, as outlined above, engaged in the removal and maintenance of vegetation to promote healthy plants; removal of accumulated detritus; fire prescribed cutting or utility easement right of way maintenance; and other activities which works to lessen fuel load and increase fire safety around structures and populated areas may operate outside these hours when all other safety guidelines are followed.
- 2) All fuel powered equipment must be in good working order and be equipped with a spark arrester.
- 3) No work should be performed on days when a "Red Flag" warning or alert is in effect. Visit <https://www.weather.gov/fire/> for the latest information on alerts.
- 4) A look out should be posted during times when work is being performed. The lookout must have a means to contact 9-1-1 and keep watch for un-wanted fire starts and should stop all work immediately and extinguish the fire should one occur. If an un-wanted fire does occur, the job foreman must report the fire to 9-1-1 so that SFD crews can respond to insure that the fire has been extinguished and investigate.
- 5) All operators must be equipped with a fire extinguisher and be trained in its operation.
- 6) Post a fire watch for a period of one half hour after the cessation of work utilizing chainsaws or other power equipment to monitor the area for un-wanted fires.

Any comments or questions regarding the above information may be submitted to:

Community Risk Reduction Division
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