

## **EBBETTS PASS FIRE DISTRICT FIRE SAFE CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS UNIMPROVED LOTS**

Regulations pertaining to fire safe clearance on properties within the boundaries of the Ebbetts Pass Fire District originate from two different ordinances and are enforced by two different agencies.

### Regulations Pertaining to Improved Properties

Public Resources Code 4291 (PCR 4291) pertaining to defensible space clearance requirements on improved properties (properties with homes or other structures) are enforced by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). PCR 4291 establishes two distinct zones that require removal of certain types and amounts of vegetation from around structures. The **Defensible Space Zone** is the area within 30 feet of the structure(s) and the **Reduced Fuel Zone** is the area between 30 feet and 100 feet from the structure, or to the property line, whichever is nearest.

### Regulations Pertaining to Unimproved Properties

In order to help enhance the effectiveness of the PCR 4291 requirements and add to the safety of our homes, families, communities and the safety of Firefighters trying to protect homes from wildfires, Ebbetts Pass Fire District Ordinance 2003, Section 11 extends the **Reduced Fuel Zone** concept to the unimproved (vacant) subdivision parcels or lots that are adjacent to structures.

The purpose of extending the **Reduced Fuel Zone** concept to adjacent improved properties is based upon the premise that modifying the fuel load on the vacant lot will help keep a wildfire from intensifying as it moves across a vacant lot and threatens an adjacent structure. Modifying the fuel load on a vacant parcel reduces heat intensity, reduces flame lengths and helps keep flames from spreading from the ground to the tree tops.

The information on the reverse side provides details of the clearance requirements for **unimproved** properties.

The Ebbetts Pass Fire District Ordinance Covers:

- EPFD's ordinance applies to unimproved lots or parcels within established subdivisions.
- EPFD's ordinance might also be applied to selected portions of an unimproved parcel that is outside the boundaries of a subdivision but adjacent to improved parcels within the subdivision.
- EPFD's fuel modification requirements for unimproved parcels **are the same** as CDF's PCR 4291 requirements for the Reduced Fuel Zone which is the area within 30-100 foot around a home).

The Ebbetts Pass Fire District requirements for unimproved parcels are:

- Remove all dead vegetation.
- **Dry, cut grass and pine needles MAY STAY - 3-4" deep.**
- Thin and Separate Live Vegetation by separating trees and bushes from each other and from dry, dead ground fuels.
- Surround clumps of vegetation with cleared areas.
- Maintain a vertical clearance space of at least 3 times the height of a shrub between any shrub and overhanging tree branches.
- Interrupt the fire's path by breaking up continuous shrub masses like Manzanita.
- Remove ladder fuels like tree limbs at least 6 feet high. **YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO WALK FREELY UNDER YOUR TREES.**
- Remove or thin tree sapling that are growing under larger trees. These saplings will never become real trees and create ladder fuels that endanger the health of normal mature trees.
- While they may constitute a safety hazard if they fall, individual standing dead trees that are properly pruned may not necessarily be deemed a fire hazard. However, groups of dead trees that have the potential to easily catch fire and spread from one tree to another may be deemed a fire hazard and be removed.

*For more information or assistance please call the Ebbetts Pass Fire District fire prevention office at: 209-795-7393*