

Rule 208 Burn Registration Program

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**RULE 208
BURN REGISTRATION PROGRAM****1.0 BURN REGISTRATION AND REPORTING:**

- 1.1 All persons who desire to conduct agricultural or prescribed burning in the District in any particular calendar year must register their planned burn projects with the District. The North Coast Fuels Management Cooperative (NCFMC) members register their burns in August of each year. Other agricultural and prescribed burners register their burns prior to the anticipated burn season. Updates and late additions to this registration process are accepted. The burn registration must include: the name of the permittee, including a contact person with phone number; a listing of all projects planned, with legal descriptions of their locations (township, range, Section #); an estimate of the total acreage and/or tons of material to be burned; and a meteorological prescription addressing smoke management concerns.
- 1.2 The District will accept burn registrations in whatever format the registrant wishes to use, as long as the required information is included in the registration. The District will supply and the registrant shall complete and submit to the AQMD, a Burn Registration Smoke Management Plan for each distinct project or watershed unit(s) prior to burning.
- 1.3 The Air Pollution Control Officer shall submit a report to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) of the agricultural and prescribed burning conducted each calendar year in the District, and no later than 45 days from the end of each calendar year. The report includes the estimated tonnage and/or acreage for each type of waste burned from both agricultural and prescribed burning by county.
- 1.4 The District shall report all special permits (no-burn day permits) issued each calendar year in the District to the California Air Resources Board (CARB), after December 31st of each year and no later than 45 days after that date. This report includes the number of such permits issued, the date of issuance of each permit, the person or persons to whom the permit was issued, and estimate of wastes burned pursuant to the permit, and a summary of the reasons why denial of each permit would have threatened imminent and substantial economic loss.
- 1.5 Once the California Air Resources Board establishes an electronic reporting system for agricultural and prescribed burning, the District will modify this Section of its Smoke

Management Program to participate in the reporting system, unless the system requires considerable District resources.

- 1.6** When a natural ignition occurs on a no-burn day, the initial “go/no-go” decision to manage the fire for resource benefit will be a “no-go” unless:
- 1.6.1** (1) After consultation with the district, the district decides, for smoke management purposes, that the burn can be managed for resource benefit; or
 - 1.6.2** (2) For periods of less than 24 hours, a reasonable effort has been made to contact the district, or if the district is not available, the ARB.
 - 1.6.3** (3) After 24 hours, the district has been contacted, or if the district is not available, the ARB has been contacted and concurs that the burn can be managed for resource benefit.
 - 1.6.4** A “no-go” decision does not necessarily mean that the fire must be extinguished, but that the fire cannot be considered as a prescribed fire.
- 1.7** A post-burn smoke management evaluation shall be submitted by the burner for fires greater than 250 acres.

2.0 BURN AUTHORIZATION SYSTEM

- 2.1** The District operates a daily burn authorization system which regulates agricultural and prescribed burning. The burn authorization system specifies the amount, timing and conditions for burn projects on a daily basis within the District boundaries.
- 2.2** The purpose of the burn authorization system is to minimize smoke impacts in smoke sensitive areas, avoid cumulative smoke impacts and prevent public nuisance. As such, all burn authorization requests are evaluated first by these considerations.
- 2.3** In evaluating burn authorization requests the District considers the following factors:
- 2.3.1** Air quality; (Ambient Air Quality Standards)
 - 2.3.2** Meteorological conditions expected during burning;
 - 2.3.3** Types and amounts of materials to be burned;
 - 2.3.4** Location and timing of materials to be burned;
 - 2.3.5** Locations of smoke sensitive receptors; and
 - 2.3.6** Smoke from all burning activities, including burning in neighboring air districts or regions which may affect the air quality in this District.
- 2.4** Burn authorizations are given on a first come first served basis. Once a burn authorization is given it is only rescinded if meteorological conditions change such that adverse air quality impacts are likely, or if burning by a fire protection agency to abate an imminent fire hazard is suddenly and unexpectedly required in the same area.
- 2.5** A burn authorization from the District only authorizes the ignition of a burn *if* the smoke management conditions given in the burn registration are met at the time of ignition and are expected to be met for the duration of the burn. A burn authorization does not relieve the burner from meeting the conditions of the burn registration plan for the specific burn. It is the burner’s responsibility to make sure all conditions listed in the burn registration plan are met prior to ignition. To validate the specific smoke transport conditions that exist on

each site, the District requests the burn operators to either release a helium filled balloon or ignite a small pile of brush to verify that favorable smoke transport conditions exist.

- 2.6** When an authorization to burn has been given by the District, a unique identifying number shall be assigned to that burn to track the particular burn and provide confirmation to the burner that the burn has been authorized.
- 2.7** To request a burn authorization, a burner must contact the District by phone, fax, e-mail or in person no sooner than 48 hours prior to the planned ignition. The District shall respond to a request for authorization within 24 hours of receipt of the request or within 1 hour of the planned ignition in the event that the request is submitted less than 24 hours prior to the time of the planned ignition.
- 2.8** In order to help plan burn projects prior to requesting a burn authorization from the Air District, burners may obtain a 48-hour forecast, 72-hour outlook and a 96-hour trend for specific burns from the California Air Resources Board duty meteorologist. These forecasts are not a substitute for a burn authorization, and contain no guarantee that a favorable forecast will necessarily lead to a burn authorization approval, but are intended solely to help in burn project planning. District staff is also available to help in meteorological forecasting and smoke management planning if needed.
- 2.9** The District maintains a daily log, recording any burn authorizations approved, the location of the burns, the amounts of material burned, number of complaints received about agricultural and prescribed burning, planned and unplanned wildfires occurring that day and any other relevant information related to smoke impacts for that day, including notifications from the burners and planned project ignitions not authorized. This data is used in the burn authorization process in the following days, in evaluating the success and efficiency of the smoke management program, in response to citizen complaints and in the preparation of reports related to the smoke management program.
- 2.10** Multi-day burns require authorization be obtained on a daily basis from the Air District to continue with the burn.
- 2.11** A burn project may impact air sheds in other Districts of states the District staff shall notify the appropriate air quality agency prior to ignition. Any concerns these agencies have over the planned burn will be considered.

3.0 SMOKE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

- 3.1** Each burn project will be registered, subject to section 1.0, for smoke management planning purposes, either via the District's Burn Registration/Smoke Management Plan form, or an equivalent document providing the necessary smoke management planning information.
- 3.2** Burn projects less than 10 acres in size need only submit the information contained in the Burn Registration Section of the District smoke management plan (questions 1-6). Burn projects greater than 10 acres but less than 100 acres must complete all the questions found on the District smoke management form. Before issuing an authorization to burn, the District, at its discretion, may require additional smoke management procedures to be used

if a burn: a) is greater than 100 acres in size, b) may impact smoke sensitive areas, or c) presents other potential problems.

3.3 The following smoke management actions will be considered for every burn project, and may require written submittal to the District of the actions taken, consistent with the guidelines above and the District Burn Registration/Smoke Management Plan form.

- 3.3.1 Meteorological Prescription.** Provide a detailed meteorological prescription that must be met to proceed with the burn. At a minimum the prescription must include acceptable wind direction. Other considerations may include wind speed, temperature profile, winds aloft, humidity, temperature, actual and predicted inversions, burn day status and forecast precipitation. Sources of where weather forecasts will be obtained to make smoke management decisions for the burn project may also be asked for.
- 3.3.2 Contingency Actions.** The actions the burner will take if smoke from the burn project produces unacceptable smoke impacts, which may include: stopping further ignitions, active fire suppression, rapid mop up and other appropriate techniques that are discussed with the District.
- 3.3.3 Smoke Mitigation.** Actions that will be taken to minimize smoke from the burn, which may include: minimum drying times/fuel moistures, piling and/or windrowing materials, active mop up of smoldering, pretreatment of fuels and other appropriate techniques.
- 3.3.4 Burning Alternatives.** Describe the alternatives to burning which have been considered for this burn project and the basis of why the alternatives were not feasible or justified.
- 3.3.5 Smoke Sensitive Receptors.** A description of what smoke sensitive receptors, such as towns, schools or roads, may be required. A map showing the location of sensitive receptors and predicted smoke travel may also be required.
- 3.3.6 Public Notification.** The potentially affected public will be notified of the burn project by one or all of the following: media announcements, phone contact lists, road signs and other appropriate techniques.
- 3.3.7 Complaint Handling Procedures.** A procedure shall be developed that insures that all complaints about smoke impacts received by a company or individual conducting the burn are promptly reported to the District.
- 3.3.8 Smoke Monitoring.** Describe the procedures that will be used to monitor and track the smoke transport from the burn project, which may include: a smoke spotter to check on downwind sites, ambient air monitoring, aerial monitoring or other appropriate methods.