

# City of Vista Fire Department

Development Services Section

200 Civic Center Drive, Vista CA 92084

## Guideline:

*Weed Abatement Program Frequently Asked Questions*



## Guideline G-12

Updated: January, 2008

## ***Weed Abatement Program***

### **1. What is the “Weed Abatement Program”?**

In an effort to reduce vegetation fires in the city of Vista and the Vista Fire Protection District, a Weed Abatement Program has been established. To implement this program the Fire Department Weed Abatement Inspector sends notices to abate hazards to all unimproved parcels within the Vista Fire Department service area. The notice requires that the property owner abate any existing hazard within 30 days or the weed hazard will be abated by the Fire Department contractor.

### **2. What authority does the City and District have to enforce the Weed Abatement Program?**

Notices are given pursuant to the provisions of Title 8, Chapter 8.60 of the Municipal Code of the City of Vista, California or the Vista Fire Protection District Ordinance. Both ordinances require the abatement of public nuisances and clearance of vegetative growth from structures and roadways.

### **3. Why did I receive a weed abatement notice?**

The Fire Department has determined that your property may potentially contain conditions that constitute a fire hazard or public nuisance. Notices are issued to provide you an opportunity to abate existing hazards prior to the stated deadline.

### **4. How much do I have to pay if the Fire Department Contractor does the work?**

If the property is not abated by the deadline, the Fire Department weed abatement contractor will perform the work and the charges specified in his contract, along with an administrative fee of \$250 will be billed to the property owner. Failure to pay the billing will result in the charges plus an additional administrative fee being added to the property tax bill.

### **5. Am I responsible for someone else dumping on my property?**

Yes, the property owner is responsible for the maintenance and weed abatement of their own property at all times.

### **6. The property is no longer mine, what do I do with the notice?**

Change in ownership of the property is not always recorded immediately. Therefore, the notice might go to the prior owner. In this case, inform the weed abatement Inspector of the change in ownership by calling (760) 639-6140, or the phone number listed on the notice.

**Can I appeal the weed abatement notice?**

Yes, the owner of said land, or authorized agent thereof, may appeal to the City Council of the City of Vista or the Board of Directors of the Vista Fire Protection District and show cause if any there be, why the public nuisance should not be abated. Such appeal shall be filed in writing with the City Clerk of Vista, 600 Eucalyptus Ave, Vista, California, 92084, or the Secretary of the Board of the Vista Fire Protection District within ten (10) days from the date of this notice.

**7. How do I dispute a weed abatement charge on my tax bill?**

A request to investigate such charges must be in writing and sent to the Vista Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau 175 N. Melrose Drive, Vista, CA 92083. All records and photography of the property will be presented to the property owner to show the work that was done on the property. If the charges were assessed in error, the Fire Department will submit a letter to the County Assessor's office requesting that the charges be removed.

**8. If I have several acres, do I have to abate the entire parcel?**

All parcels 5 acres or less shall be completely mowed. Parcels larger than 5 acres shall comply with the requirements of the current weed abatement policy.