



COMPLIANCE ADVISORY

December 30, 2014

Open Burning Program Guidelines

The purpose of this advisory is to remind all persons who conduct open burning within the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District (District) of the District's rules and regulations related to open burning.

BACKGROUND: The District regulates open burning because of the health impact of smoke, which is made up of fine particulate matter (PM). Inhalation of PM from smoke can cause respiratory problems, including persistent coughs, wheezing, and physical discomfort. Inhalation of PM can also increase susceptibility to respiratory infections and aggravate existing respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic bronchitis.

REQUIREMENTS: The following is a summary – for full requirements, refer to District Rules 2.8 and 6.1.

All burning:

- All burning must be done on a 'burn day', as declared by the District
- All burning must be done in such a way to produce a minimum of smoke, e.g. small piles, dry material
- Only dry natural vegetative material may be burned – no foreign material such as lumber or debris
- Material can't be moved from one location to another to be burned

Agricultural (Ag) burning:

- All burning, requires a valid (current calendar year) permit from the District
- On the day you want to burn, you must call the District and speak with someone to obtain authorization
- Once your burn is authorized, you must call your local dispatch to inform them of the burn

Rural residential yard burning:

- Burns may require a permit with your local fire district
- On the day you want to burn, you must call your local dispatch to inform them of the burn

TYPES OF OPEN BURNING:

- Ag Burning:** Orchard prunings, field stubble, and related burning of levees, ditches, in or adjacent to fields in cultivation or being prepared for cultivation. This burning must be done as part of an operation involved in the growing and harvesting of crops or raising of fowls or animals for the primary purpose of making a profit, providing a livelihood, or of conducting agricultural research or instruction by an educational institution.
- Prescribed Burning:** Range improvement, wildlife habitat improvement, wildland vegetation management, or forest management. This burning may only be done by a land manager after getting a smoke management plan approved by the District.
- Other Burning:** Fire department training burns, right-of-way clearing, levee, ditch or reservoir maintenance, and miscellaneous burns (e.g hazard abatement, fire hazard reduction, backfires necessary to save life or property), that are not associated with an agricultural operation. This burning must be done in coordination with the District.
- Rural residential:** Burning of vegetation on a property not located in an incorporated city, which contains living quarters and is not used in commercial operations.

REPORTING OF ACREAGE: Over the years, there has been some confusion/inconsistency on the reporting of acreage when calling in an Ag burn.

All burns should be reported to the nearest whole number of acres, with increments of .5 acres or greater being rounded up. The minimum acreage reported for any burn is 1 acre.

For orchard prunings, report the acreage the prunings derived from. Do not try and estimate the size of the pile. For example, if you have a 50 acre orchard, and you prune all the trees and make 5 piles, for each pile that you burn, you would report 10 acres. Do not try and adjust for young or old trees, as the emission factors we use for orchard prunings is already an average of all tree ages.

For ditches/levees, calculate the acreage using the width and length of the area to be burned. For example, if you burn an area that is 20 feet wide by a quarter mile (1,320 feet) long, that would be 26,400 square feet, and there are 43,560 square feet in an acre, so $26,400/43,560$ would be 0.61 acres, rounded up and reported as 1 acre.

CLARIFICATION: If an agricultural property also has a residence on it, only the vegetative material that is generated directly from the commercial agricultural operation may be burned under the ag burn permit, in accordance with the terms of the permit. The material that is associated with the residence cannot be burned under the ag burn permit number, and must be done under the terms of the local fire department as a rural residential burn.

BURNING OF SACKS/CONTAINERS: District rules allow for the burning of paper sacks, which contained pesticides or fertilizers, so long as the burning is done in accordance with Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR's) Guidelines for Emptying and Burning of Pesticide Bags. Burning shall be conducted at the site of application under the conditions of an agricultural burn permit issued to the grower or applicator, in accordance with proper disposal guidelines specified on the packaging and downwind from any person or susceptible crops. In addition, only one day's accumulation of empty bags can be burned in any one day. Only paper bags, inner bags, and paper outer containers may be burned.

If the sacks are the only material being burned on that day, you need to call and get District authorization before you burn, but you would report it as only sacks, and there would not be an acreage fee for that burn. If you are burning the sacks on a burn pile of prunings, when you call in the burn, report the pruning acreage and notify the District you are also burning sacks.

The DPR guidelines can be found at: <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/lea/Advisories/29/attach29.htm> or http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/enforce/compend/vol_8/chapter1.pdf

Plastic containers (or plastic lined sacks) cannot be burned – you should follow your ag department's recommendations on proper disposal (triple rinse and recycling with the landfill or your product distributor).

ENFORCEMENT: State law and District rules provide for substantial penalties to persons found to be in violation of open burning regulations, which include but are not limited to illegal material, smoke nuisance, use of a burn barrel, burning on a no burn day, burning without a permit, burning without authorization, and burning outside of burns hours.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: For additional information regarding this advisory, contact Jeff Pinnow at (530) 757-3650.