

El Dorado, Amador residential burn permits available

Dooryard burn permits are required beginning today in the Amador-El Dorado-Sacramento-Alpine Unit of CalFire. These permits are issued to the landowner free of charge for a period of three years and allow for the burning of dry vegetation (not household trash) that originates on the landowners property.

Unit Chief Bill Holmes is strongly encouraging everyone to begin disposing of all the vegetation (whole trees, tree branches and shrubs) that ended up on the ground. He said in a statement, "We have a lot of extra vegetation all over the county from the storm and if we don't begin to aggressively dispose of this fuel immediately, come summer our wildfires will have the potential of becoming catastrophic. It is estimated that in some areas there is 33 percent more fuel on the ground than in past years."

Holmes states that annually 16 percent of our wildland fires in Amador and El Dorado counties are from burning debris piles that escape the control of the person in charge; this year we anticipate that the unit will see a significant increase in the number of debris burn pile escapes during fire season as residents work towards disposing of the dead vegetative material around their homes.

To reduce your risk of starting a wildfire, begin disposing of your vegetation now when it is safe to burn your piles. Keep your pile(s) to 4 feet by 4 feet, scrape a 10-foot wide ring around each debris pile down to bare dirt, have a shovel and water supply (charged hose) nearby to use in the event your fire escapes from the pile and make sure an adult is in attendance until the pile is completely extinguished.

Remember, you can only burn on permissive burn days. For Amador County, call (209) 223.6246 and for El Dorado County call (530) 621.5897.

For tips on burning debris piles safely or other fire safety topics, visit www.fire.ca.gov for fact sheets. For alternatives to burning piles, contact the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council at www.edcfiresafe.org.