



THE KEY TO A SAFER TOMORROW

FIREWISE

BULLETIN

2017 CHIPPING EDITION

OPEN SEASON ON BRUSH!

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It's not 'wabbit' season as Elmer Fudd® would say, nor duck season as the venerable Bugs Bunny® would retort – it's opening day for chipping season starting April 1st. The Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF) has already started accepting applications for the free chipping service.

Correctional facility residents are no longer providing the labor to feed the chipper. The service is now operated by an independent contractor, Joaquin's Landscaping, utilizing the NCFF chipper. Please be aware that this causes the cost of providing the chipping to increase and requires strict adherence to program criteria terms, which must be acknowledged as agreed upon to schedule chipping service. The terms have been updated and changed to clarify the pile requirements. One should carefully read the terms prior to clicking accept so that there are no disappointments with piles being left unchipped. The following key points are part of the terms:

- Piles must be located adjacent to a road easily accessible by the tow vehicle and chipper, including ease of egress without significant backing up. Roads need not be paved, but must be navigable by two wheel drive truck. Please do not expect crews to drag brush any distance.
- Brush must be stacked cut end (butt) towards the road and in a manner that is easy to pick up.
- Piles should only include brush and limbs cut from the property. Stringy, vine cuttings, such as poison oak or blackberry, are not allowed as they may foul the chipper. Construction or non-brush materials are also not allowed.
- Piles must be safely accessible to the crews, not just the vehicles. If terrain next to the road is too steep or unsafe, the crews will not attempt chipping.
- The service is for residents only and not commercial enterprise. This means businesses should not submit applications nor should residents endeavoring a commercial activity at their home, such as creating a vineyard.
- The chipping crew has the final say as to whether a pile meets the 'Program Criteria'. If the pile is deemed noncompliant, it will not be chipped and an explanation will be sent to the requestor.

Please be forewarned that the guidelines for chipping will be strictly adhered to. We have gotten exasperated and even irate calls in the past regarding chipping crews appearing and vanishing without chipping brush piles. Investigating the complaints invariably reveal the piles were not compliant with the basic program requirements.

The chipping service is provided by the County of Napa or Napa County Fire Dept. to support NCFF and its mission for residents living in fire danger zones.

Elmer Fudd & Bugs Bunny © Times Warner



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OOOPS, ONLINE MISFIRE

We must apologize for certain link features to access chipping being inoperable. If one searches for 'napa firewise chipping' links pop up that would seem to take you directly to the chipping application. Unfortunately and embarrassingly, this is sadly not the case. Links tie to pages which are noted as 'error' or 'no longer accessible'.

The most reliable path to chipping requests is via the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF) website, www.napafirewise.org. One can simply search 'napa firewise' or type in the proper address to get to the NCFF home page. Once at the site, look to the lower left of the home page and you'll see

CHIPPING Q

A common question after submitting a chipping request is 'When will the chipper come?' The simple answer is within a few weeks. There is a queue for chipping requests. The basic protocol is to attack the oldest request, received ahead of other requests, first. The caveat to this guideline is that other requests in the same area will also be chipped at the same time, regardless of when they were submitted. We need to efficiently approach chipping to minimize travel time between piles. This means a request submitted

blue text about chipping. Simply click the text and you'll be walked through the application process. You don't need to remember anything more than searching 'napa firewise' and then to click text.

Chipping requests can also be made by good old fashioned phoning. Calling 707 967 1426 will get you in contact with a real person who will take your chipping request. Our preference is to have requests submitted online as it makes tracking the requests easier and less labor intensive.

the day before might be chipped immediately because it is near the oldest request which is three weeks old.

People ask for chipping to occur on a specific day. Unfortunately, we are not generally able to comply with such requests. We need a concentration of requests to visit certain areas.

So, when will a pile be chipped? Within a few weeks to a few days from when the request was submitted.

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE HAD BETTER BE A PERMIT

Tempted to ignite brush cuttings where they drop rather than go to the effort of hauling and piling for chipping? Be aware that there are laws and restrictions regarding open fires today. One needs to apply for a burning permit via Bay Area Air Quality Management District, www.BAAQMD.gov, and the permit requires a fee. In addition, one needs to verify with CAL FIRE as to any requirements or restrictions for burning. But wait, you aren't done yet, as once you have the permit in hand you need to verify that the chosen day of ignition is not a 'spare the air day' which precludes any burning.

Chipping is the more environmentally friendly way to deal with cuttings. You'll probably find that paying someone to properly pile the brush will be less than the cost of the burn permit. In addition, you won't have the liability for a fire gotten away from you. Many do not realize that they are liable for costs associated with any wildfire you cause as a result of activities such as burning brush. The NCFF free chipping program looks even better, all things considered.

Napa Communities Firewise Foundation

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