

US Forest Service
San Bernardino National Forest
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Bernardino National Forest Resumes Winter Pile Burning

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif., January 20, 2009— Fire crews are resuming winter pile burning at various locations across the San Bernardino National Forest. The favorable change in weather now provides opportunities to resume annual winter pile burning activities on hazardous fuels reduction projects on the forest. Smoke and flames may occasionally be visible from the roadways. Firefighters will have “prescribed fire” signs posted in project areas. The winter burning program will continue through early spring as weather and conditions permit.

“Burning slash piles is part our overall operations to reduce the risk of wildfires potentially spreading into communities,” stated San Bernardino National Forest Fire Chief Mike Dietrich. “Our standard practice is to evaluate the weather, forecasts, fuels conditions and adjust our operations accordingly, stopping and resuming as conditions warrant,” Chief Dietrich added.

Slash and debris pile burning are part of fuels treatment projects that include mechanical removal of vegetation. Fuel reduction projects near mountain communities include removing dead trees as well as thinning and stacking piles of dense brush, and burning the piles in the wet season.

The Pile Burning Locations Are:

Wrightwood Area

The pile burning will begin in the Circle Mountain area (also known as Helicopter Hill). Smoke and flames will be visible at the top of Lone Pine Canyon Road and possibly in the East Canyon area of Wrightwood. For the Boundary Ridge project, this will be our first pile burning effort in that area.

Angelus Oaks / Barton Flats Area

The Angelus Oaks project is ongoing and if the weather cooperates, we should complete burning of all piles this season. This project is adjacent to Angelus Oaks and smoke and flames may be visible from State Highway 38. Occasionally motorists on State Highway 330 will see smoke from the pile burning.

Firefighters continue to burn slash and debris piles in the Barton Flats area east of Angelus Oaks. Smoke may be visible from State Highway 38.

Idyllwild Area

Firefighters are continuing to burn slash and debris piles near the Alandale Station on State Highway 243 north of Pine Cove in the Idyllwild area. Motorists along the highway will see smoke. Occasionally residents in San Jacinto and Hemet may see smoke from the project.

Local residents can help by assuring their property is fire safe. Residents in the local mountains can get assistance and advice in a number of ways:

- Contacting your Local Fire Safe Council to get tips on fire safety and what homeowners can do around their property.
- Find your local council on the web at <http://www.firesafecouncil.org>
- Forest Care Program provides up to 75% reimbursement for thinning and clearance. For more information call 1-888- 883-8446 or visit Forest Care on the web at: <http://www.sbnfa.com/forestcare.php>
- Residents in both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties can find a wealth of information on the Mountain Area Safety Taskforce (MAST) website at: <http://www.calmast.org/>

For more information regarding pile burning, or any other questions about your National Forest, please call your local Ranger Station at:

Arrowhead Ranger Station 909-382-2758

Big Bear Ranger Station & Discovery Center 909-382-2790

Cajon Ranger Station 909-382-2850

Idyllwild Ranger Station 909-382-2922

San Geronio Ranger Station 909-382-2881

For additional information about the San Bernardino National Forest, please visit:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino/>

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