

Vegetation Management & Defensible Space Ordinance in El Dorado County

Oak Hill Fire Safe Council
February 11, 2020



Overview

- Why Vegetation Mgmt?
- Defensible Space
- Lean, Clean & Green
- Good Neighbors
- Community Education
- Clearing Land
- Compliance & Monitoring
- More Information



Why Vegetation Management?

- In recent years, California has experienced large and devastating wildfires
 - **2018 Camp Fire** (Butte County): 86 deaths; 18,804 structures destroyed
 - **2018 Carr Fire** (Shasta County): 8 deaths; 1,604 structures destroyed
 - **2017 Thomas Fire** (Ventura, Santa Barbara Counties): 23 deaths*, 1,063 structures destroyed
 - *21 deaths attributed to mudslides/debris flow in the burn scar
 - **2017 Tubbs Fire** (Napa, Sonoma Counties): 22 deaths; 5,643 structures destroyed
- El Dorado County fires
 - **2014 King Fire** (Pollock Pines, North County): 12 homes destroyed
 - **2014 Sand Fire** (South County): 19 homes destroyed
 - **2007 Angora Fire** (Meyers and South Lake Tahoe): 254 homes destroyed

EDC Ordinance 5101, Chapter 8.09*

Provides for the removal of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials situated in the unincorporated areas of the county to:

- Build upon the existing grassroots efforts being done Countywide (e.g. Fire Safe Councils, FA 50, SOFAR, etc.)
- Reduce the potential for fire, and
- Promote the safety and well-being of the community

Defensible Space



What is it?

Area around a structure where combustible vegetation has been cleared, reduced or replaced.

Space that acts as a barrier between a structure and an advancing fire.

One of the most cost-effective ways to protect a building from a wildfire (FEMA).





Community Education

- Vegetation management is an ongoing, long-term activity
- Involves presence and dialogue with residents and landowners
- Encourage and promote proactive removal and voluntary compliance
- Community meetings
- Information and on-site education (CEAs)
- Partner with local fire safe councils, fire districts, Emergency Preparedness & Response and others

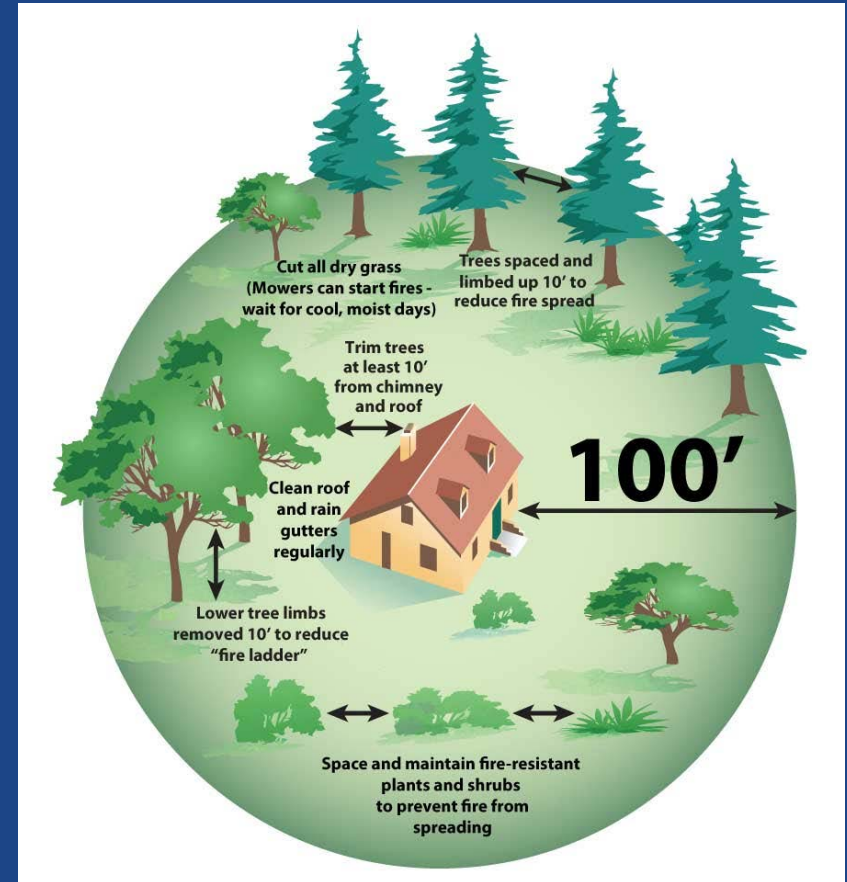


Where do I start...

...A few options

Lean, Clean & Green

- Ordinance 5 10 1, Chapter 8
- 100 feet of clearance
- Lean
 - Small amounts of flammable vegetation
- Clean
 - No accumulation of dead vegetation or other flammable debris
- Green
 - Plants that remain healthy and green during fire season



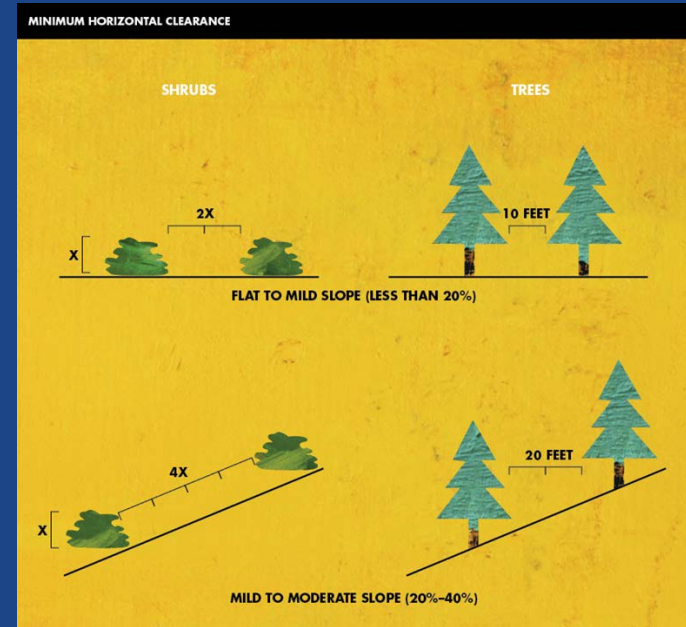
100 Feet of Clearance

Vertical Spacing



Large trees do not have to be cut and removed, as long as all plants beneath them are removed. This eliminates the fuel ladder.

Horizontal spacing depends on the slope of the land and the height of the shrubs or trees.



Horizontal Spacing

Work with Your Neighbors

These zones make up the 100' of Defensible Space required by law



Many homes do not have 100' of space between structures and parcel lines.

Property owners are required to maintain defensible space to their property line.

Work with neighbors to help provide defensible space for their homes, and ask neighbors for help if their property threatens yours.

In most cases, the most effective solution is a cooperative approach between neighbors.

Goatscaping or Targeted Grazing



Mowing and Trimming



Chipping and Masticating



Other Options for Land Clearing

- Burn piles (in compliance with AQMD rules and dates. Never leave unattended)
- Eco-friendly sprays or mulching
- Fire Safe Councils
- Neighborhood co-op
- Contractors (ensure they are licensed and insured)



Before (above) After (below)





EL DORADO COUNTY
BURN INFORMATION LINE
LEARN BEFORE YOU BURN



Placerville:

(530) 621-5897

(866) 621-5897

So. Lake Tahoe:

(530) 621-5842

(888) 332-2876



El Dorado County

Air Quality Management District (530) 621-7501

www.edcgov.us/AirQualityManagement

THANK YOU FOR WORKING WITH US TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY!

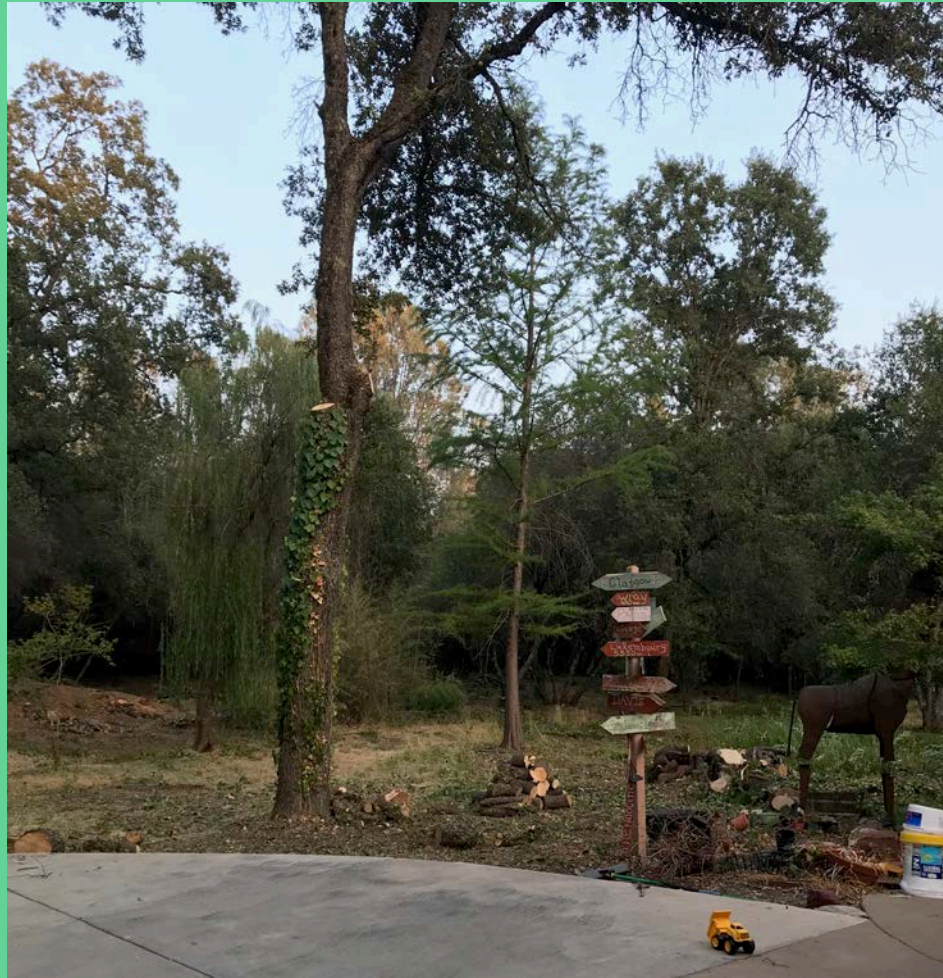
Equipment Use Reminders



- Mow and use equipment before 10 am
- Never mow on a hot or windy day
- String trimmers are safer options than lawn mowers

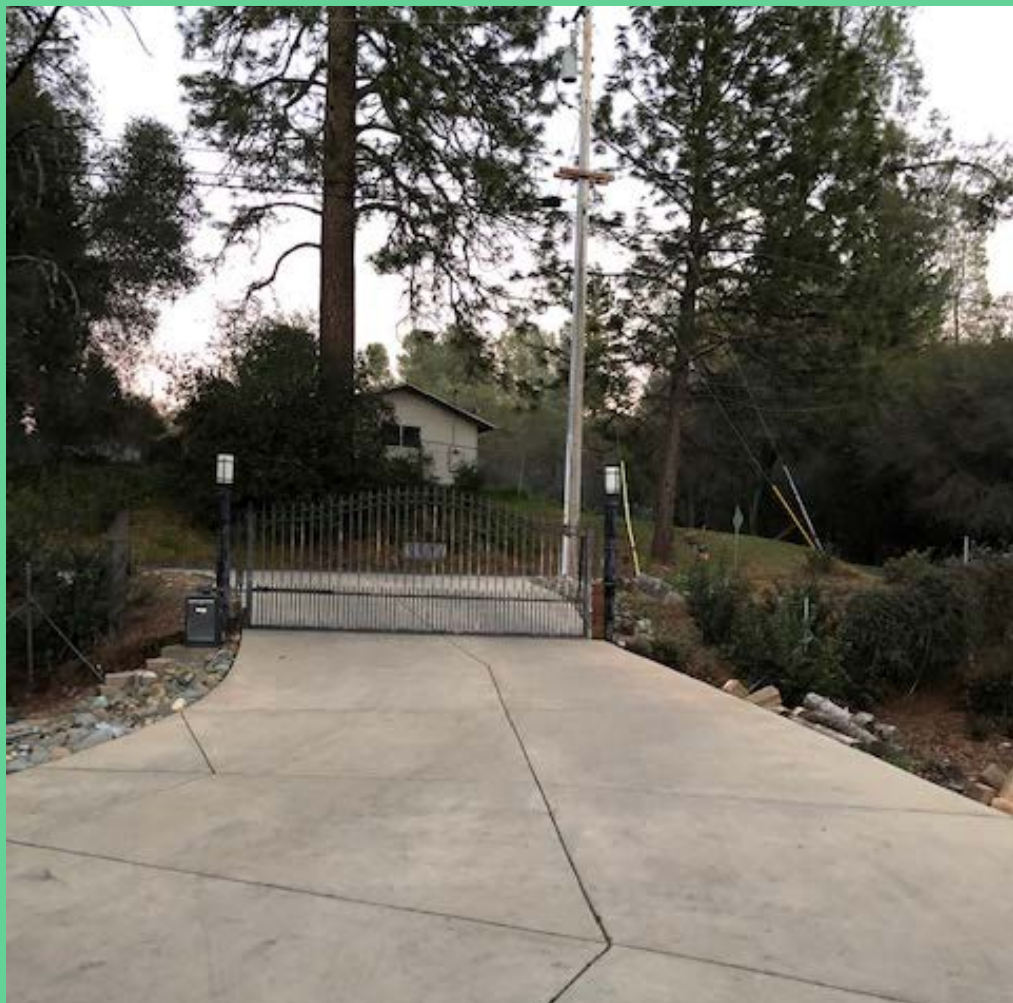




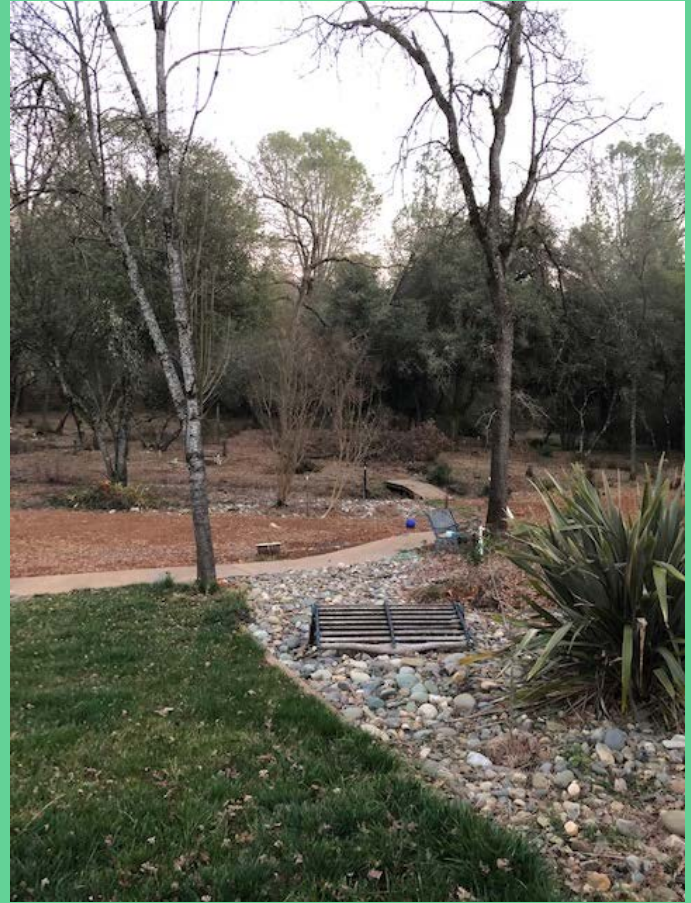












2020 Defensible Space Inspections



Compliance & Monitoring: Today through 2020

Ongoing

Community Education

County staff, in coordination with Fire Safe Councils, CAL FIRE and local Fire Districts, will provide education to the public and property owners on the ordinance.

On or before
February 15, 2020

Notification Letters

Properties in the identified areas will be mailed a notice that vegetation must be removed by June 1, 2020. A sample inspection checklist will be included with the letter and posted on the web.

June 1, 2020 &
Beyond

Compliance Inspections

Inspections will begin in the identified areas

- County Emphasis Areas (CEA)
- Wildfire Risk Areas (WRA)

Defensible Space Inspections

Enforcement and Investigative Officials

Enforcement Official:
Chief Administrative
Officer or Designee

Investigative Official:
CAL FIRE, Fire Chief of any
district in the County or
Designee

Inspection(s)

A “Notice of Defensible Space Inspection” report will identify if the property is in compliance with the ordinance or if violations need to be corrected and a date for re-inspection.

Three failed inspections will result in a Hazard Abatement Notice.

Enforcement

Violations of the ordinance, may initiate the following:

- Meet and confer
- Hazard Abatement Notice
- Appeals hearing
- Forced abatement for repeated non-compliance

County Emphasis Areas (CEA)

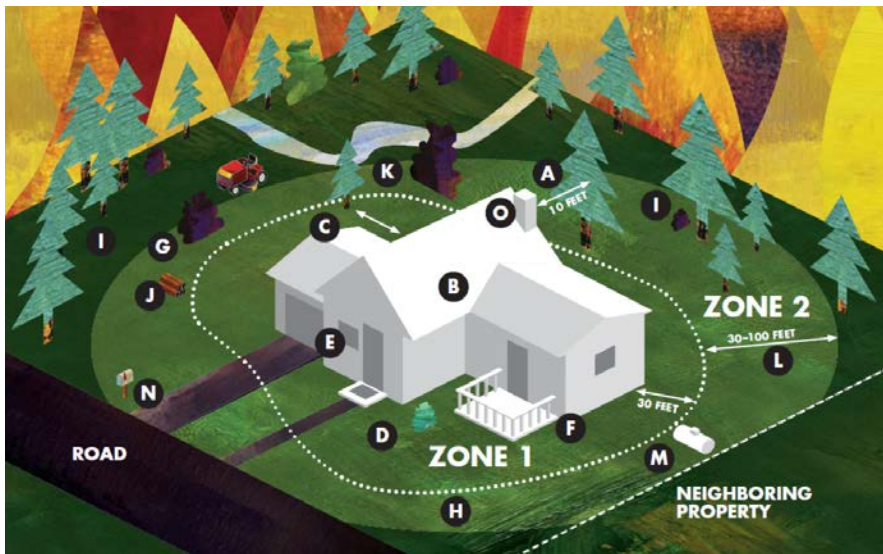
An area designated by the County for focused, proactive inspections.

The County works with CAL FIRE to identify these areas annually.

Methodology and criteria used to determine CEAs

- Call volume to a specific area
 - Structural density of an area
 - Ingress/egress
 - Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone rating
 - Fire history/ignition history
 - Prevailing weather patterns
 - Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
 - Topography
 - Existing PRC 4291 data
-

2020 Defensible Space Inspections



County of El Dorado
Vegetation Management Program
Modified from CAL FIRE's
LE-100a (2/2020)

Date: _____

NOTICE OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTION

An El Dorado County representative has inspected your property for fire hazards. You are hereby notified to correct the violation(s) indicated below. Failure to correct these violations may result in a citation and fine.

OWNER/TENANT:		INSPECTION ADDRESS:	
INSPECTOR NAME:	CONTACT NUMBER:	Inspection No. <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="3"/>	No Violations Observed <input type="checkbox"/>

Zone 1 / Within 30 feet of all habitable structures (Refer to illustration below):

- A. Remove all branches within 10 feet of any chimney or stovepipe outlet, pursuant to PRC § 4291(a)(4) and 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(2).
- B. Remove leaves, needles or other vegetation on roofs, gutters, decks, porches, stairways, etc. pursuant to PRC § 4291 (a)(6) and 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(1).
- C. Remove all dead and dying trees, branches and shrubs, or other plants adjacent to or overhanging buildings, pursuant to PRC § 4291 (a)(5) and 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(2).
- D. Remove all dead and dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds and needles, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(1).
- E. Remove or separate live flammable ground cover and shrubs, pursuant to PRC § 4291 (a)(1) and BOF General Guidelines item 1.
- F. Remove flammable vegetation and items that could catch fire which are adjacent to, or below, combustible decks, balconies, and stairs, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(4).
- G. Relocate exposed wood piles outside of Zone 1 unless completely covered in a fire-resistant material, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(a)(3).

Zone 2 / Within 30–100 feet of all habitable structures (Refer to illustration below):

- H. Cut annual grasses and forbs down to a maximum height of 4 inches, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(b)(2)(B).
- I. Remove fuels in accordance with the Fuel Separation or Continuous Tree Canopy guidelines (see back), pursuant to BOF General Guidelines item 4.
- J. All exposed woodpiles must have a minimum of 10 feet clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(b)(2)(C).
- K. Dead and dying woody surface fuels and aerial fuels shall be removed. Loose surface litter, normally consisting of fallen leaves or needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches, shall be permitted to a maximum depth of 3 inches, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(b)(2)(A).

Defensible and Reduced Fuel Zone / Within 100 feet of all habitable structures (Refer to illustration below):

- L. Logs or stumps embedded in the soil must be removed or isolated from other vegetation, pursuant to BOF General Guidelines item 3.

Other Requirements:

- M. Outbuildings and Liquid Propane Gas (LPG) storage tanks shall have 10 feet of clearance to bare mineral soil and no flammable vegetation for an additional 10 feet around their exterior, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1299.03(c)(1).
- N. Address numbers shall be displayed in contrasting colors (4" min. size) and readable from the street or access road, pursuant to 2016 CFC § 505.1.
- O. Equip chimney or stovepipe openings with a metal screen having openings between 3/8 inch and 1/2 inch, pursuant to 2016 CBC § 2113.9.2.

COMMENTS:

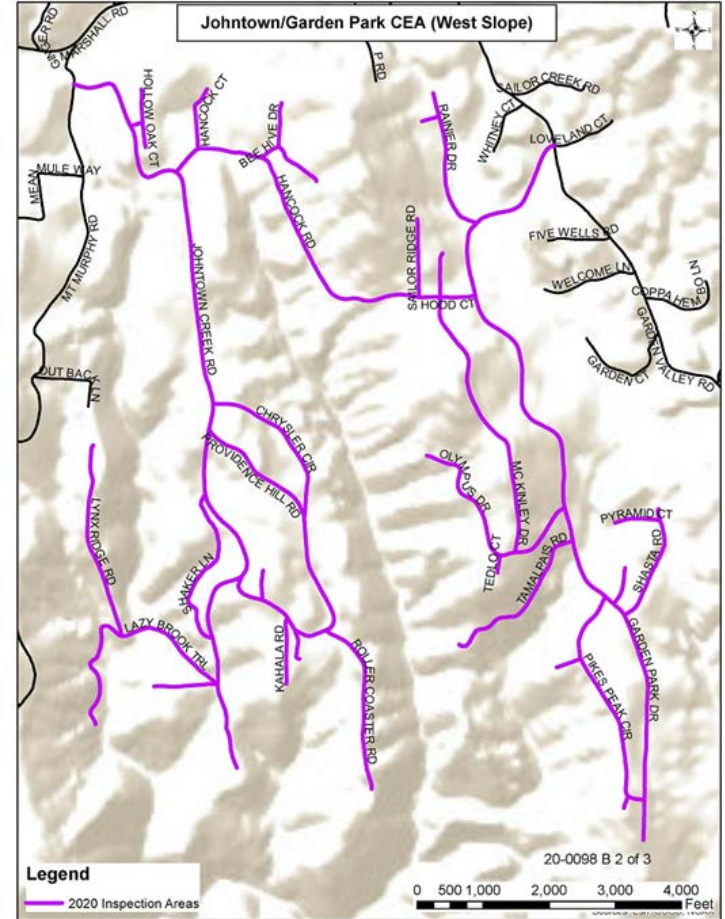
LEARN MORE:



IMPORTANT All violations marked must be addressed by the owner/tenant. A re-inspection of the property will occur on or after _____

2020 CEA: Garden Valley Johntown/Garden Park

- Beehive Drive
- Chrysler Circle
- Garden Park Drive
- Hancock Court
- Hancock Road
- Hollow Oak Court
- Hood Court
- Johntown Creek Road
- Kahala Road
- Lazy Brook Trail
- Lynx Ridge Road
- McKinley Drive
- Olympus Drive
- Pyramid Court
- Pikes Peak Circle
- Providence Hill Road
- Rainier Drive
- Roller Coaster Road
- Sailor Ridge Road
- Shaker Lane
- Shasta Road
- Tamalpais Road
- Tedlo Court



Collective Efforts



- Vegetation Management Projects
 - Fire Adapted 50
 - Utility work
 - Shaded Fuel Breaks
 - Public/Private Partnerships
- Road Brushing
- Tahoe Basin
- Fire Safe Councils
- Homeowners Associations
- Community Ordinances
- City of Placerville
- And more...

El Dorado County Ready Together



Vegetation Management Emergency Preparedness & Response El Dorado County

(530) 621-4663

www.facebook.com/edcpreparedness

www.edcgov.us/government/CAO/VegetationManagement



Find us on 