

BACKGROUND

Government Code Section 51175

- Establishes state commitment to mitigating wildfire risks in high-risk areas.
- Wildfires threaten public peace, health, safety, and local agency resources.
- Cross-jurisdictional issue requiring coordination among cities, counties, special districts, and state/federal agencies.

Purpose of Government Code 51175

- Facilitates fire prevention planning and wildfire mitigation strategies.
- Requires:
 - Defensible space requirements (PRC 4291)
 - Fire-resistant construction codes
 - Vegetation management mandates
- Ensures appropriate fire safety standards and land use policies in high-risk zones.
- Promotes agency collaboration to protect communities and natural resources.



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2

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Increasing Wildfire Severity in California

• Factors: Climate change, prolonged droughts, vegetation buildup, development in fire-prone areas.

2024 Statistics:

- 8,024 wildfires, burning 1,050,012 acres.
- 1,716 structures destroyed; 1 fatality.
- Highest acreage burned since 2021.

January 2025 (Los Angeles County):

- Palisades & Eaton fires: 57,000+ acres burned.
- 18,000+ structures destroyed/damaged.
- 29 fatalities; 200,000+ evacuated.
- Insured losses: \$28 billion (one of the costliest wildfire events in U.S. history).

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3

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Importance of Defensible Space

- Critical for reducing home loss during wildfires.
- Creating buffer zones around structures by:
 - Removing flammable vegetation.
 - Reducing fuel loads.
 - Implementing fire-resistant landscaping.

Proven Effectiveness

- Essential for improving resilience in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).
- Homes with 100+ feet of defensible space have much higher survival rates.

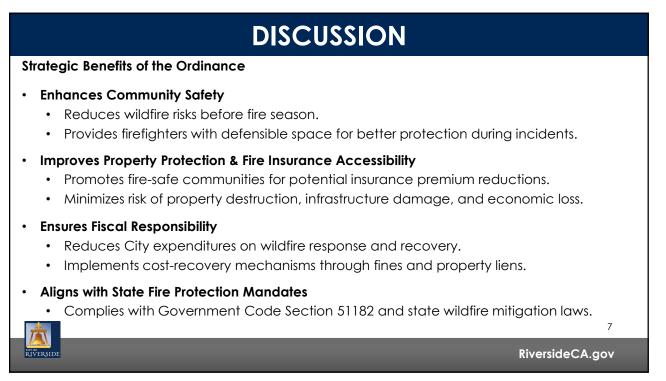


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5

DISCUSSION **Inspection and Enforcement Procedures** • Initial Inspections: Conducted 30 days after clearance notices are issued. • Non-Compliance Citations: Violations reported with corrective action requirements. Fines & Forced Abatement: Persistent non-compliance results in fines and forced clearance. Nuisance Abatement: Costs recovered through property liens or tax assessments. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemption Categorically Exempt (Class 4) for minor land alterations. • Common sense exemption (14 CCR section 15061(b)(3)) - focuses on wildfire hazard mitigation. **Seasonal Public Nuisance Designation** Properties with repeated violations classified as seasonal public nuisances. Allows automatic annual enforcement actions without additional hearings. 6 RIVERSID **RiversideCA.gov**



Defensible Space Workshop

The operational implementation of the proposed ordinance will be presented to the Mayor and City Council during a future workshop. During this workshop, the detailed plans for applying and implementing the ordinance will be shared for review and discussion.

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8

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