

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE DIVISION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Topic: Agricultural Burning - Range Improvement

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This policy and procedure provides guidance in the enforcement of District rules relating to prescribed burns used in Range Improvement applications. It is the policy of the APCD to allow Range Improvement burning as regulated under APCD Rule 401 and the requirements of Article 3, Chapter 3, Part 4, Division 26 of the California Health and Safety Code.

APPLICABILITY

The provisions and exemptions provided in the Range Improvement burning regulations apply to the use of prescribed burns used to improve the grazing potential of range lands, remove vegetation for a wildlife, game or livestock habitat, the initial establishment of an agricultural practice on previously uncultivated land and in limited applications, disease and pest prevention.

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to all prescribed range improvement burning operations:

1. A permit to burn must be obtained from a public fire department, fire protection agency or other agency authorized to issue such permits by the Air Resources Board. A list of agencies authorized to issue burning permits is provided as Appendix A to Policy and Procedure VI.

Range improvement burns may be conducted through a cooperative agreement or contract involving a public agency. The public agencies having authority to burn lands are the U.S. Forest Service, Santa Barbara County Fire Department, Santa Barbara City Fire Department, Carpinteria/Summerland Fire Department, Lompoc City Fire Department, Santa Maria City Fire Department, Vandenberg Air Force Base Fire Department, and California Department of Parks and Recreation.

2. Range Improvement Burning is permitted only on days designated as permissive burn days by the Air Resources Board (refer to Policy and Procedure VI.C., Burn Day Determination). The Air Pollution Control Officer may allow Range Improvement burning on a No-Burn day between January 1 and May 31 providing that more than 50 percent of the land has been brush treated and may also permit agricultural burning operations on a No-Burn day if denial of such

permission would threaten the applicant with imminent and substantial economic loss. The Agricultural Commissioner must certify in writing that denial would threaten imminent economic loss.

APCD policies regarding permits to conduct burning on days designated as No-Burn days are outlined in the "Burning on a No-Burn Day", Policy and Procedure VI.A.2.

3. Materials to be burned must be free of Non-Agricultural materials. Materials must not contain tar, tar paper, petroleum wastes, tires, plastics, demolition debris, treated wood, trash or household garbage.
4. Materials to be burned must be arranged so as to burn with a minimum of smoke, be loosely stacked to allow maximum drying and provide good combustion.
5. Materials to be burned must be free of dirt and moisture which would hinder complete combustion.
6. For a Range Improvement burn the brush must be treated at least six months prior to the burn if economically and technically feasible. Unwanted trees over six inches in diameter must be felled and dried prior to the burn.
7. Standing brush may be burned without being cut or treated. However, District policy is to encourage brush treatment by crushing whenever the procedure is practical.
8. Prior to burning the materials to be burned shall have been dried for the minimum periods listed below. These periods include the period from drying or cutting to the day of burning:
 - a) Six (6) weeks for trees and large branches
 - b) Three (3) weeks for prunings and small branches
 - c) Ten (10) days for wastes from field crops
9. Range Improvement burns shall be ignited as rapidly as practicable within applicable fire control restrictions.
10. Use an approved ignition device that does not produce black smoke, such as butane, propane, LPG or diesel oil burners. All ignition devices using the following burning agents will be approved:
 - Ethylene glycol/potassium permanganate,
 - gasoline/diesel,
 - propane/butane, and
 - phosphorus
 - The following are examples of devices using the above agents:

- helicopter torches	- orchard torches
- propane torches	- drip torches
- flame throwers	- jellied petroleum devices
- diesel sprayers	- commercial grenade devices
- common fuses	- matches

Any device not listed above must be approved for use by the APCO prior to its application or use.

11. The wind direction at the burning site shall be such that the smoke will not cause a public nuisance.
12. The Air Pollution Control Officer may restrict agricultural burning to selected sequentially numbered permits on specified days. The goal of this option is to ensure that a major portion of the total tonnage of materials scheduled for burning is not ignited at one time during adverse conditions.
13. Upon completion of a Range Improvement Burn the agency which conducted the burn will contact the APCD at 961-8800 to submit the following information:
 - a) Date of Burn
 - b) Total acres burned
 - c) Estimated tons of material per acre burned
14. Burning of empty sacks or containers which contained pesticides or other toxic substances is permitted on No-Burn days providing the sacks or containers are within the definition in Rule 102. of Open Burning in Agricultural Operations.

NOTE: Any open burning which meets the definition of "Wildland Vegetation Management Burning", as defined in Rule 401.B., shall be conducted in compliance with the requirements of Rule 401.D. even though such burning may also be conducted under another provision of Rule 401 or any other APCD rule (e.g., Rule 312 or Rule 313). Forest Management, Range Improvement and other agricultural burning not meeting the definition of Wildland Vegetation Management Burning do not need to comply with the requirements of Rule 401.D.

