

ORDINANCE NO. 1871

**ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7.30 OF THE AMADOR COUNTY CODE
REGARDING DEFENSIBLE SPACE REQUIREMENTS AND HAZARDOUS
VEGETATION AND COMBUSTABLE MATERIAL ABATEMENT**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Amador ordains as follows:

SECTION I. Section 7.30.050 of Chapter 7.30 of the Amador County Code shall be deleted and the following revised Section 7.30.050 shall be adopted and substituted in place of the deleted section:

7.30.050 Duty to abate hazardous vegetation and combustible material.

A. It shall be the duty of every owner, occupant, and person in control of any improved parcel of land or interest therein, which is located in the unincorporated territory of the county of Amador, to abate therefrom, all combustible material and hazardous vegetation constituting a fire hazard as provided in this chapter.

B. The intensity of fuels management may vary within the 100-foot perimeter of the structure, the most intense management requirements shall be within the first 30 feet around the building or structure. Compliance with the provisions of this Chapter is required throughout the year.

C. The requirements of this section will be satisfied if the following minimum requirements are met:

1. Zone 0 – Within 5 feet around all structures (including attached decks):

a. It is recommended to remove all combustible materials, including woody plants, mulch, wood piles, combustible trellises, and any other stored items.

2. Zone 1 – Within 30 feet around all structures or to the property line:

a. Remove all dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles from the Zone whether such vegetation occurs in yard areas around the “Building or Structure,” on the roof or rain gutters of the “Building or Structure,” or any other location within the Zone.

b. Remove dead tree or shrub branches that overhang roofs, below or adjacent to windows, or which are adjacent to wall surfaces, and keep all branches a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) away from chimney and stovepipe outlets.

c. Relocate exposed firewood piles outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely covered in a fire-resistant material.

d. Remove flammable vegetation and items that could catch fire that are adjacent to or under combustible decks, balconies and stairs.

3. Zone 2 – Within 30 – 100 feet of all structures or to the property line:

a. In this zone create horizontal and vertical spacing among shrubs and trees using the “Fuel Separation” method, the “Continuous Tree Canopy” method or a combination of both to achieve defensible space clearance requirements. Further guidance regarding these methods is contained in the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection’s, “General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space, February 8, 2006,” incorporated herein by reference.

b. 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 three inches (3 in.).

c. Cut annual grasses and forbs down to a maximum height of four inches (4 in.).

d. All exposed wood piles must have a minimum of ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

e. To encourage fuels management within the full 100 feet of a building or structure in situations where the subject building or structure is located less than 100 feet from the property line, the enforcement official shall develop documents and sample agreement(s) to share with property owners that can be utilized to facilitate any necessary work on adjacent parcels under separate ownership. These documents, part of a “Good Neighbor” packet should include a sample right of entry agreement and any other documents deemed necessary to encourage and facilitate fuels management activities on adjacent parcels. The packet materials may be established and updated as necessary from time to time by the enforcement official following review and approval by the Amador Fire Protection District Board of Directors. Fuels management activities beyond the property line should be encouraged to encompass the entire 100-foot perimeter of a building or structure; however, clearing beyond the property line is not required, and no owner is required to permit a neighboring property owner onto their property to facilitate clearing in connection with that neighbor’s building or structure.

4. For both Zones 1 and 2:

a. “Outbuildings” and Liquid Propane Gas (LPG) storage tanks shall have the following minimum clearance: ten feet (10 ft.) of clearance to bare mineral soil and no flammable vegetation for an additional ten feet (10 ft.) around their exterior.

b. Protect water quality. Do not clear vegetation to bare mineral soil and avoid the use of heavy equipment in and around streams and seasonal drainages. Vegetation removal can cause soil erosion, especially on steep slopes. Keep soil disturbance to a minimum on steep slopes.

5. The enforcement official may require more clearance distance than specified herein for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment.

The determination for appropriate clearance distances will be made based upon a visual inspection of the parcel and shall consider all factors that place the property or structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the property or structure(s) is located.

SECTION II. The Board of Supervisors finds and declares that this ordinance is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15308 (actions taken as authorized by local ordinance to assure protection of the environment) and 15061(b)(3) (“common sense exemption,” whereby there is no possibility the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment). It is exempt pursuant to CEQA 15308 because it is a regulatory action taken by the County pursuant to its police power.

SECTION III. This ordinance shall be published within fifteen days after the date hereof in a newspaper of general circulation printed and published in the County of Amador, State of California, and shall become effective thirty days after the date hereof.

The foregoing ordinance was duly passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Amador at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 10th day of March, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES: Patrick Crew, Logan Carnell, Brian Oneto, Jeff Brown

NOES: None

ABSENT: Dan Epperson



Patrick Crew, Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Heather Peek, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors


