



Ventura County Fire
Protection District
165 Durley Avenue
Camarillo, CA 93010



Ventura County Air Pollution
Control District
669 County Square Drive, 2nd Fl.
Ventura, CA 93003

Approval for Orchard- / Crop-Warming Fires

January 29, 2020

The Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD) and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) consider the well-being of the agricultural community a priority within Ventura County. There is the possibility of very cold nighttime and early morning temperatures dropping to near or below freezing. Currently, both VCFD and APCD regulations do not allow open burning for crop protection.

To help protect orchards and crops, VCFD and APCD will allow the interim use of small warming fires (consisting of orchard clippings/materials) for the sole purpose of raising the temperature within the orchard or crop to prevent freezing, subject to the following restrictions and limitations:

- Warming fires for orchard/crop protection shall only be allowed during a NOAA/NWS-issued frost/freeze advisory or when the forecasted overnight low for the area of concern is below 38 degrees Fahrenheit. Warming fires shall be extinguished each day when the threat of freezing has passed.
- Warming fires shall not be located directly on the ground and shall be within a metal or other non-combustible container, not to exceed the size of a 55-gallon drum. Any container used shall be clean and free of hazardous material/waste residue.
- Tires, tar, paper, plastic, oils, and other similar materials shall not be used for ignition purposes.
- Warming fires shall not be located within structures, including shade crop covers.
- The top of the container shall have ¼" wire mesh or other approved spark-arrestor method.



- The maximum fuel loading within the container shall not exceed a 3-foot diameter and a 2-foot height. Only dry and clean wood shall be used. Burning of trash is prohibited.
- Warming fires shall be set back a minimum of 30 feet from brush-covered land, 15 feet from property lines and structures, and 5 feet from hoop-style crop covers.
- All fires at a location must be constantly attended, and there must be a means of extinguishment readily available.
- Warming fires shall not cause excessive smoke or create a nuisance or other hazard.
- These warming fires do not require a permit. However, the local fire station shall be notified when warming fires for orchard/crop protection will be ignited.
- VCFD and APCD are not responsible for damages to property or to the general public resulting from open burning authorized by this approval. Responsibility rests with the person responsible for setting and maintaining the fire.

Warming fires are for the necessity of keeping the orchards and/or crops from freezing and are not to be used as a method to dispose of agricultural waste. Use of warming fires may be further restricted and/or terminated by VCFD or APCD at any time.

For questions regarding this matter, please contact your local fire station at (805) 371-1111, VCFD Fire Prevention counter at (805) 389-9738, or APCD at (805) 662-6960 or (805) 645-1445.

Approved and issued by:

Massoud Araghi, Fire Marshal
VCFD

Keith Macias, Manager, Compliance Division
APCD