



**MILPITAS FIRE DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF FIRE PREVENTION**

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July 2001

Dear Resident:

The fire season, which typically runs from May through the end of October, is upon us. In Milpitas, the hazardous vegetation abatement program (formerly called "weed abatement") is operated by the Santa Clara County Fire Marshal's office. This agency removes dead and overgrown vegetation through mechanical disking operations by machine, and also by removing debris by hand where access is limited. The program has been quite busy over the past months, and will continue these efforts throughout the fire season to make the hillside areas as fire safe as possible.

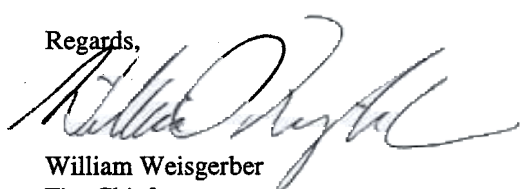
Hillside areas with tall dry grass and vegetation are a prime location for wildland fire, especially during hot weather--such as we have already been experiencing--and which will undoubtedly continue in the coming months. Each time the mercury rises it reminds us we live in an area susceptible to wildland fire, and that we need to be diligent in preparing our property for a fire-safe season. Early seasonal readings by the California Department of Forestry have indicated the fuel moisture content is already extremely low for this time of year--reaching a point well below the recorded 10-year average.

Property owners and residents can be extremely effective participants in preserving their own structures, by creating defensible space; clearing overgrown shrubs away from buildings; trimming trees to a height of at least six (6) feet, to prevent a "laddering" effect for flames; and, "green-belting" areas around structures to prevent the spread of fire up to the building. The Milpitas Fire Department has enclosed a bulletin from Tree City USA entitled "How To Reduce Wildfire Risk". We hope you find it useful in preparing your home for the fire season. If you're interested, more information can be found at these websites, www.firesafecouncil.org, and www.ci.milpitas.gov. They can also assist you if you're looking for fire resistant landscaping ideas.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Milpitas Fire Department at (408) 586-3365.

Thank you for your help!

Regards,



William Weisgerber
Fire Chief