



## DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

P.O. Box 944246  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460  
(916) 653-7772  
Website: [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)



March 4, 2022

Steve Monowitz  
Community Development Director  
County of San Mateo  
455 County Center, Second Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

**Re: Extension of Tree Permit Exemption Request Due to Current Fire Hazard Conditions**

Dear Mr. Monowitz,

Fire conditions remain elevated in San Mateo County due to below average rainfall that has resulted in widespread drought conditions and tree mortality. As an Officer of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, I am requesting that the County of San Mateo continue to take specific exemptive action related to tree removal permits for certain non-native species. Exempting these trees from the tree removal permitting process will help to increase defensible space and minimize the hazard they pose to life and personal property.

Specifically, I am requesting that you utilize your emergency powers, under Section 12.020.1 and 12.027 of the San Mateo County Significant Tree Ordinance, to exempt permitting requirements for eucalyptus (all species), pines (all species), acacia, tan oak and bay trees within 100' of any habitable structure, (including structures on adjacent properties) or within 30' of a driveway/access road, from July 1, 2022, until July 1, 2023.

This action is an important step to empowering property owners to take the actions necessary to create defensible space. Your action on this request will help to improve community safety as we enter another busy peak fire season. I look forward to discussing this further and appreciate your assistance on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nate Armstrong".

Nate Armstrong  
Unit Chief  
CAL FIRE San Mateo – Santa Cruz Unit