



DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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April 10, 2023

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 despite recent rains due to the effects of long term drought as well as the amount of dead material resulting from recent storms. 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 exemption 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, 2023, until July 1, 2024.

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