



**City of Morro Bay Fire Department
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hazard Fuel Reduction on Black Hill in the Morro Bay State Park, Morro Bay

MORRO BAY, Calif., February 10, 2015 –

The California Dept. of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) in cooperation with the Morro Bay Fire Dept., and the Air Pollution Control District have announced tentative plans to conduct prescribed pile burns of diseased, dead and downed Monterey pines in the Black Hill area of Morro Bay State Park. The pile burn project will occur as soon as weather conditions permit and between March 3rd and April 30th. Preparation of the burn piles is taking place during the month of February.

This burn project is part of the Hazard Fuel Reduction and Prescribed Fire Program for vegetation management, fuel load reduction and structure protection to numerous residences and businesses in Morro Bay. Monterey pines are experiencing major die-offs due to pine pitch canker disease and prolonged years of drought. Burn pile operations will be conducted to maintain defensible space on areas adjacent to neighborhoods and park facilities per Morro Bay Fire Department permit conditions. This treatment will greatly reduce dead, downed and diseased fuels in the wildland-urban interface, decrease potential for wildfires, enhance the health of the native plant communities, encourage increased species composition, restore essential nutrients to the soil, and aid in the control of pine pitch canker.

Please note that these prescribed burns are planned and coordinated with the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District and the California Air Resources Board in order to minimize the smoke impacts on surrounding communities. The burn is dependent on weather and air quality conditions that are favorable for smoke dispersal. If the conditions are not as desired, the burns will be rescheduled. State Parks will issue a Media Advisory 12 – 24 hours ahead of the actual burn time. The Morro Bay Fire Department will post updated information via Facebook and Twitter, post flyers in the affected neighborhoods, and will place reverse 911 calls to notify nearby residents.

Please use extreme caution while driving near Hazard Fuel Reduction operations.

County officials will continue to closely monitor air pollution levels throughout our region and provide updated forecasts on the APCD website. For more information regarding air quality and related issues, please go to the APCD website at: www.slocleanair.org or call (805)781-4390.

Note: Burning will not occur if a burn ban is in effect or if weather or brush conditions are not conducive to burning.

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[About the Morro Bay Fire Department](#)

The Morro Bay Fire Department is a multi-hazard emergency response agency protecting life, the environment and property from the effects of fire, hazardous materials, medical and other life safety emergencies. The department provides firefighter/paramedic coverage to the City of Morro Bay with personnel on duty 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.