

MAY 7, 2009

**AROUND**

## **CAL FIRE now requires burn permits**

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit has declared that a burn permit will be required for all hazard reduction burning in Mariposa County as of Friday, May 1.

CAL FIRE Unit Chief Dale Hutchinson would like to remind all residents that Mariposa County currently has open hours for burning. To ensure safe hazard reduction burning remember to have piles no more than four feet in diameter; clear all flammable material and vegetation within 10 feet of the outer edge of the pile; keep a water supply close to the burning site; an adult should be in attendance with a shovel until the fire is out; and no burning shall be undertaken unless weather conditions (particularly wind) are such that burning can be considered safe. Remember no household trash or garbage can be burned.

This process will be re-evaluated on a weekly basis. Citizens are also required to call the burn day information line 966-1200 prior to ig-

ning their hazard reduction pile.

Burn permits can be obtained at the nearest CAL FIRE station.

CAL FIRE realizes for many homeowners providing 100 feet of defensible space will mean a tremendous amount of work, but it will be worth it. When CAL FIRE inspects the property and finds it is not in compliance, officials will request that the homeowner continue to work toward full compliance before the next inspection.

"The important thing is to break up vertical and horizontal continuity of the fuel," said Chief Hutchinson. "Try to get 10 to 15 feet of spacing, both vertically and horizontally between shrubs, large plants, and trees."

If the property has brush underneath larger trees with limbs, the resident will want to limb up the tree at least 14 feet or remove the brush. Breaks like this in the vegetation help to slow down an advancing fire and gives the firefighters a fighting chance.