



Scripps Ranch Fire Safe Council

A San Diego Community Fire Prevention Organization

Brush Clearing FAQ's

- **How much brush material will be removed?** *The objective is to reduce the fuel load without killing the vegetation. Grasses and weeds will be cut to two to four inches in height. Dead vegetation will be removed. Fallen trees will be trimmed and large trunks will be left across embankments to serve as erosion control. Regarding brush, two key factors in creating a fire safe landscape are providing fuel discontinuity by the separation of flammable plant cover (thinning), and reduction in the fuel load of remaining plants by cutting out dead and excess growth of native/naturalized vegetation (trimming). Brush will be thinned leaving 30 to 50% of the plants in small clumps 3 to 5 feet in height, depending on the slope. No plants will be uprooted. Some will be cut to six inches and some natives will be cut to 12 inches above the root crown. Thinning will be prioritized as follows: 1)invasive non-native species (e.g. Pampas Grass), 2) non-native species (e.g. Acacia), 3) flammable native species (e.g. Black Sage) 4) native species, 5) regionally sensitive natives. Following thinning, remaining plants will be trimmed by the removal of dead material from the interior of the plants.*
- **Will trees be removed?** *Eucalyptus sprouts and saplings that are 3 inches or less in diameter at chest height will be cut and removed. Dead trees up to 6 inches in diameter at chest height will be removed if it can be done safely. Stumps and roots will not be removed.*
- **Will brush abatement cause erosion on slopes?** *A four to six-inch layer of material will be left on the ground to suppress weeds and prevent rain from directly impacting the earth. No roots will be removed. Chipping will be done on site, where possible.*
- **I planted a tree in the "clear" zone. Can I request that it not be removed?** *Yes. The crews try to avoid removing any plantings by homeowners.*
- **Will material be removed through my yard?** *Only with the homeowners permission.*
- **How often will this be redone?** *Maintenance will be required every two years -- plus or minus a year depending on the rainfall.*
- **Has anyone been specific on this setback distance for each individual home on the horseshoe?** *The city code requires 100 feet from inhabited structures. There are very few areas in the horseshow where there is more that 200 feet (horizontally) between the upper and lower homes. One visible exception is the area below the tennis courts.*
- **Are other areas in Scripps being "brush cleared" as well?** *Yes. This is the 17th neighborhood that has formed a Chapter of the Fire Safe Council.*
- **Where can I get more information?** *Check the Scripps Ranch Fire Safe Council website. srfiresafecouncil.org*