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It's never too early to prepare for fire season. One critical way we can protect ourselves is by creating *defensible space* around our homes. San Diego Fire-Rescue Department has begun conducting door-to-door brush inspections in certain areas of District Five as part of a proactive approach to community fire safety. To give residents a heads-up about the coming inspections, my office worked with the Fire Department to notify everyone affected (see attached flyer). For more information about what you can do to be prepared for the next wildfire, **join me this Friday, May 3 at 10:00am at Fire Station 40 in Rancho Peñasquitos for a community event dedicated to helping you protect your home using defensible space and other fire-safe strategies.**

Over the weekend, I appeared on NBC's *Politically Speaking* to discuss infrastructure spending in the FY14 budget (watch the video [here](#)). Unfortunately, the Mayor's proposed budget has 10% less spending on infrastructure maintenance than is needed just to prevent accelerated deterioration. It also ignores the need to assess the condition of city facilities, which are falling apart, and sidewalks, which are key to walkability and safe routes to schools. Our neighborhoods have lived with crumbling streets for long enough. Investing in our neighborhoods must be a top priority, and I am committed to turning around years of neglect.

Thank you to everyone who came out last week for my first District Five Signature Event. For those of you who missed it, for some local coverage of the event and a breakdown of the infrastructure crisis facing San Diego, I recommend Elizabeth Himchak's piece in the *RB News Journal*. You can read it online [here](#) or check out the print edition this week.

Best,

Hon. Mark Kersey

# Proactive Brush Management Program



The Fire-Rescue Department responds to hundreds of vegetation fires annually involving excessive vegetation not maintained by property owners. In February 2008, the Fire-Rescue Department expanded its Proactive Brush Management Program City wide. Door to door brush inspections are being conducted of properties located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas for compliance.

Starting around May 2013, the Fire-Rescue Department's Fire Prevention Bureau staff will begin conducting door to door brush inspections of canyon rim homes or homes that abut native vegetation in the Rancho Penasquitos, Carmel Mountain, Black Mountain Ranch and Torrey Highlands communities. The purpose of the inspections is to assure properties are in compliance with the City's Brush Management Regulation. Property owners are required by the California Fire Code and the City of San Diego Municipal Code to keep their property free of any potential fire hazards at all times.

For information on how to provide a proper defensible space and to assure your property is in compliance, can be found on the Fire-Rescues Departments website at: <http://www.sandiego.gov/fireandems/inspections/brush.shtml>

Check your local directory assistance or websites for potential landscapers or tree contractors. The Fire Rescue Department cannot provide or recommend landscape or tree contractors. It is the responsibility of the property owner to assure all brush management work is conducted within the requirements of the City's Brush Management Regulation / City Landscape Regulation 142.042: <http://docs.sandiego.gov/municode/MuniCodeChapter14/Ch14Art02Division04.pdf>



Before Brush Management



After Thinning and Pruning

## What a property owner can expect:

- A uniformed Code Compliance Officer with the Fire-Rescue Department's Brush Management will be inspecting the property.
- Because of an extremely high volume of inspections all initial inspections are unannounced.
- If no one is home at the time of the initial inspection or the property cannot be viewed from an adjacent property, the Code Compliance Officer will leave a door hanger requesting the property owner to contact the Fire-Rescue Department within 5 business days so arrangements can be made to inspect the property.
- It is the goal of the Fire-Rescue Department to minimize any inconvenience to the property owner. We will attempt to reasonably accommodate the property owner's schedule.
- All properties must be inspected; failure to contact the Fire-Rescue Department within 5 business days may result in legal action to gain access to the property.
- The inspections consist of evaluating all vegetation conditions within the property boundaries for compliance of the California Fire Code and the City's Brush Management/Landscape Regulation.
- If the property is found to be in violation and the property owner is home, compliance requirements will be discussed at that time. All Notices of Violation will be mailed to the legal property owner within 3 business days of the inspection.
- If the property is found to be in violation, the re-inspection date will be indicated on the Notice of Violation. Usually 30 days from the date of the initial inspection will be given to bring the property into compliance.
- If compliance is not achieved after the initial 30 days, the property owner will be given an additional 2 weeks to comply.
- A \$300 non-compliance fee will be incurred by the property owner for the 3rd and subsequent visits.
- If compliance is not achieved after the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit, the inspection will be forwarded to the City's Attorney's Office for abatement action to bring the property into compliance.

***It is the goal of the Fire-Rescue Department to reduce the wildfire risk to the community by providing a proper defensible space. A proper defensible space allows the fire department time to arrive and space to fight the fire.***

***If you have any questions contact the Fire-Rescue Department's Brush Management Hotline at (619) 533-4444.***