

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE DIVISION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Topic: Ag and Non-Ag Burning - Disposal of Russian Thistle

Distribution: All Policy Holders

This policy and procedure provides guidance in the enforcement of APCD rules relating to prescribed burns used in the disposal of Russian Thistle (Salsola Kali) also commonly known as "Tumbleweed". It is the policy of the APCD to allow the burning of Russian Thistle as regulated under Rules 312, 313 and 401 and Section 41809, Article 2, Chapter 3, Part 4, Division 26 of the California Health and Safety Code.

APPLICABILITY

The provisions and exemptions provided in open burning regulations apply to the use of prescribed burns to dispose of Russian Thistle as it impedes agricultural operations and often serves as a source of fuel for wild fires when accumulated in fire hazard areas.

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to all prescribed burning operations involving the disposal of Russian Thistle:

1. When Russian Thistle is being burned, authorization must first be granted by a chief of a fire department or fire protection agency of a city, county or fire protection district, the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection or his or her duly authorized representative, the County Agricultural Commissioner, or the Air Pollution Control Officer. A list of agencies authorized to issue burning permits is provided as Appendix A to Policy and Procedure VI.
2. Agricultural burning is permitted only on days designated as permissive burn days by the Air Resources Board (Policy and Procedure VI.A.1, Burn Day Determination). The Air Pollution Control Officer may permit agricultural burning on a No-Burn day if denial of such permission would threaten the applicant with imminent and substantial economic loss. Normally non-agricultural burning must be conducted only on permissive burn days.

APCD policies regarding authorization to conduct burning on days designated as No-Burn Days are outlined in the "Burning on a No-Burn Day", Policy and Procedure VI.A.2.

NOTE: Within the Cuyama Valley the burning of Russian Thistle does not require a burn permit nor authorization and may be conducted on No-Burn days without prior authorization.

3. Russian Thistle to be burned must be arranged so as to burn with a minimum of smoke, be loosely stacked to allow maximum drying and provide good combustion.
4. Russian Thistle to be burned must be free of dirt and moisture which would hinder complete combustion.
5. Prior to burning, Russian Thistle should be dried for the minimum recommended periods listed below:
 - a) Three (3) weeks for small branches $\frac{1}{4}$ " to 1" in diameter
 - b) Ten (10) days for very fine branches less than $\frac{1}{4}$ "
6. Use an approved ignition device that does not produce black smoke.

All ignition devices using the following burning agents will be approved:

- Ethylene glycol/potassium permanganate,
- gasoline/diesel,
- propane/butane, and
- phosphorus

- The following are examples of devices using the above agents:

- helicopter torches
- propane torches
- flame throwers
- diesel sprayers
- common fuses
- orchard torches
- drip torches
- jellied petroleum devices
- commercial grenade devices
- matches

Any device not listed above must be approved for use by the APCO prior to its application or use. Igniting tires or pouring diesel fuel on the materials are NOT acceptable ignition methods!

7. Prescribed open outdoor burning will not commence prior to sunrise, and no additional waste material/fuel will be added to any fire after two hours before sunset. Any time limits stipulated within the Burn Permit must be strictly adhered to.
8. All fires shall be thoroughly extinguished before being left by the attendant(s). Adequate provisions should be made for the immediate extinguishment of the fire should it threaten to spread out of control.
9. Regardless of permit, no fires shall be started any time when the weather conditions are such that it would be unsafe to burn or cause a hazard to vehicular traffic flow.
11. The wind direction at the burning site shall be such that the smoke will not cause a public nuisance.
12. The Air Pollution Control Officer may restrict agricultural burning operations to selected sequentially numbered permits on specified days. The goal of this option is to ensure that a major

portion of the total tonnage of materials scheduled for burning is not ignited at one time during adverse conditions.

NOTE: Any open burning which meets the definition of "Wildland Vegetation Management Burning", as defined in Rule 401.B., shall be conducted in compliance with the requirements of Rule 401.D. even though such burning may also be conducted under another provision of Rule 401 or any other APCD rule (e.g., Rule 312 or Rule 313). Forest Management, Range Improvement and other agricultural burning not meeting the definition of Wildland Vegetation Management Burning do not need to comply with the requirements of Rule 401.D.

