



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **ASSOCIATIONS JOIN FIRE DISTRICT IN EFFORT TO PREVENT WILDFIRE Project Focuses on Removal of Dead and Diseased Trees**

**RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif.** — Beautiful scenery has long been a source of pride for Rancho Santa Fe, Fairbanks Ranch, and the surrounding communities. The Eucalyptus forests, tree-lined streets, manicured lawns, and landscaped flower beds create a rural, peaceful setting for those living in the area.

Unfortunately, some of this vegetation has gone from being decorative to becoming a potential fire hazard. Over the last few years, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District (RSFFPD) has seen an increase in the amount of tree mortality, brought on by prolonged drought, insect infestation, disease, and lack of maintenance. These changes have led to an increased fire hazard within the Fire District boundaries.

In an effort to protect lives and property, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Safe Council is working with the RSFFPD to launch a campaign to work with homeowners to eliminate hazardous trees within the District and bring properties within compliance of existing fire codes.

“We are absolutely not looking to remove all of the trees in the area,” explained Cliff Hunter, Fire Marshal. “Rather, we are targeting only those trees that are clearly dead or dying. This will help minimize the fire hazard in the community and beautify the landscape.”

Following increased inspections throughout the District, property owners with dead or dying trees on their land will be notified via mail that the afflicted trees should be removed. Additionally, property owners with trees that have debris such as peeling bark or dead limbs hanging from them will receive a notice to clean up the trees, thereby reducing the fire hazard. The District will first be looking to address those dead or dying trees that are in close proximity to structures and roadways, and then, where needed, move on to trees further away. Resources such as potential tree removal companies and replacement tree suggestions will be offered.

The mission of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District is “To protect life, property, and environment through prevention, preparedness, education and emergency response.” Formed in 1946, the Fire District now spans approximately 42-square miles and protects over 29,000 citizens. The Fire District currently operates out of four full-time fire stations and serves the communities within and surrounding Rancho Santa Fe and 4S-Ranch.

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