



# City of Petaluma

11 English Street, Petaluma, California 94952

Fire Marshal's Office (707) 778-4389 Fax (707) 206-6036

Re: Parcel # <<APN>>

<<Num>> <<Street>>

## HAZARDOUS VEGETATION AND RUBBISH REMOVAL

As fire season has expanded into a year-round timeframe, the potential for fires are of great concern to the City of Petaluma. Brush and weed abatement to reduce fuel loads is a proactive fire prevention measure that will stop, slow, or confine the spread of fire; allow time for fire suppression personnel to respond and extinguish a threatening fire; and reduce the fire threat from properties that adjoin the city limits. Please help keep Petaluma fire-safe by removing hazardous vegetation and rubbish on your property. See Abatement details on the back page.

## NOTICE TO DESTROY HAZARDOUS VEGETATION AND REMOVE RUBBISH

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the City of Petaluma adopted Ordinance No. 2878 N.C.S., adding Chapter 10.70 to the Petaluma Municipal Code declaring that rubbish and noxious or dangerous hazardous vegetation growing upon or in front of any private property located within the City of Petaluma is a public nuisance.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that property owners shall without delay remove such rubbish and noxious or dangerous hazardous vegetation, otherwise they will be removed and the nuisance will be abated by the city of Petaluma in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 10.70 of the Code of the City of Petaluma. All costs of abatement including those for inspection, administration and removal will be assessed upon the lot and lands from which or in front of which or adjacent to which such hazardous vegetation is abated and such costs will constitute a lien upon such lots or lands until paid.

## NOTICE OF HEARING

- All property owners having any objections or protests to the proposed removal or destruction of such hazardous vegetation or rubbish are hereby notified to attend a meeting of the City Council of the City of Petaluma on the **8<sup>th</sup> Day of April 2024**, when the City Council will hear any objections and give consideration to the same.
  - The Council Chambers are located at City Hall, 11 English Street, Petaluma, California.
  - The meeting is set to begin at 6:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter.
  - If you plan on removing the weeds yourself or by a contractor of your choice, you do not need to attend this hearing. **Only attend the meeting if you object to the Fire Marshal clearing your property if you fail to do it yourself.**
- For those property owners liable to be assessed for the work of abating such nuisance where the city performs the removal or destruction of such hazardous vegetation or rubbish, are also hereby notified to attend a meeting of the City Council of the City of Petaluma, tentatively scheduled for the 7<sup>th</sup> Day of October, 2024, where City Council will hear and consider objections which may be raised by in accordance with Petaluma Municipal Code Section 10.70.080.
- If the property identified on this notice is **not cleared of weeds by May 31, 2024**, it will be cleared by a City contractor, and the cost of removal will be assessed against the property, including a \$250.00 administrative fee. Failure to remit fees due will result in a special assessment placed on a secured property tax roll. Please note that the fee rates of the private contractor hired by the City typically increase each year.
- **All parcels must be maintained free of brush, weeds, and rubbish that pose a hazard until the first major rains in the Fall.** If your property is abated early, any re-growth shall continue to be abated.

- If at any time your property is determined to be a hazard, it may be abated by the City without additional notice.
- For a copy of the Weed Abatement Guidelines, please visit our website at <https://cityofpetaluma.org/documents/weed-abatement-guidelines-updated-2020/> or contact the Fire Prevention Bureau.
- **NOTE:** If you no longer own this property, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (707) 778-4389 or [firemarshal@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:firemarshal@cityofpetaluma.org) at your earliest convenience. Office location: 22 Bassett Street, Petaluma, CA 94952.

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (707) 778-4360 (voice) or (707) 778-4480 (TDD). Translators, American Sign Language interpreters, and/or assistive listening devices for individuals with hearing disabilities will be available upon request. A minimum of 48 hours is needed to ensure the availability of translation services. In consideration of those with multiple chemical sensitivities or other environmental illness, it is requested that you refrain from wearing scented products.

**Creating defensible space is an essential part of preparing for fire season in California. Providing proper defensible space minimizes fire damage by providing a space and/or fuel break where firefighters can defend against fire.**

It is important to know that inspections are conducted throughout the dry season, and the property must be maintained to remain in compliance. Even if a property owner abates their property early in the season, there is potential for re-growth and it must be abated.

Weeds, grass, vines, or other growth that are capable of endangering property shall be cut down and removed by the owner or occupant of the premises. Vegetation clearance requirements in the wildland-urban interface areas shall be in accordance with CFC Chapter 49, CFC: Vegetation and Title 19, Division 1§307(b): Clearances.

**Here's how to comply with the requirements by May 31<sup>st</sup>:**

- Parcels five (5) acres or less must have all combustible growth cut or removed. Weeds shall be cut to 4" or less in height.
- Larger parcels shall maintain a minimum 30' perimeter of abatement around the property. Additional fuel breaks may be required on larger properties to divide the property into smaller areas that would separate large amounts of fuel. The abatement trail should be a minimum of 30' wide.
- A defensible space of 30'-100', depending on grade and other factors, around all structures, either man-made or natural, in which material is capable of allowing fire to spread unchecked, must be cleared, treated, or modified to slow the rate and intensity of an approaching fire.
- Roadways, driveways, and Fire Department access roads shall be cleared of combustible vegetation equal to the width of the road plus ten feet (10') on both sides.
- Property owners who notice the existence of rare, threatened, or endangered plants or wildlife on a noticed property must notify the Department of Fish and Game (or appropriate agency) at least ten (10) days in advance of undertaking the vegetation clearance. If the landowner is aware of any State or Federally-listed species on the property, then the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Fish and Game should be notified prior to the abatement. If a State or Federal candidate or listed species is killed, injured, or captured, the landowner shall report this information to the Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, respectfully.

**When mowing weeds, it must be done safely:**

- One small spark from a mower blade hitting a rock can result in a fire.
- Mowing should be done as early in the morning as possible, while temperatures are low, humidity is high, and grasses are still damp with dew.
- Do not mow on windy days.
- Always have a water source and a pointed shovel handy.
- Mow early and often.