

Published March 2nd, 2022

## MOFD chief discusses Shaded Fuel Break project and the coming fire season

By Vera Kochan



Red Flag Warnings may come early this year.  
Photo courtesy MOFD

Due to the lack of rain this winter, the fire season and its conditions are coming much sooner this year. In preparation for Lamorinda's worst-case scenario, Moraga-Orinda Fire District Chief Dave Winnacker gave a detailed presentation during the Moraga Town Council's Feb. 23 meeting.

MOFD has firmed up the area of the Shaded Fuel Break project that was made possible by the \$6.3 million grant recently received from the California Climate Initiative through Cal Fire. The project "will start at Highway 24 near Cal Shakes, on the north side of 24 at the Wilder off ramp; and work its way down the western side of Wilder subdivision; wrap around the area known as Lost Valley by the PG&E [Pacific Gas & Electric] substation; then around the country club running up along the high ground on Flicker Ridge," explained Winnacker. "So really, moving between Lost Valley, the country club and the community of Canyon; making its way down to

Canyon Road; following Canyon Road down to the Valle Vista Staging Area; and then wrapping around the neighborhood by J.M. [Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School]; around Sanders out across to Saint Mary's [College]; and then across through areas just immediately east of the GHAD [Geologic Hazard Abatement Districts]; and terminate at Sky-Hy at the Moraga-Lafayette line." Winnacker stressed that only dead or dying trees will be removed in addition to any limbing-up of the lower portions of trees that are close to the ground.

"We will essentially put a large catcher's mitt around West Orinda and South Moraga," continued Winnacker. "We're happy to report that we have been in a collaborative manner with Cal Fire, who's been putting in for a project on this year's CCIS grant cycle to extend that work out around Rossmoor."

Additionally, the MOFD Board has two proposed new ordinances in the works. One ordinance is to extend the very high Fire Hazard Severity Zone to districts that are Wildland Urban Interface Fire Areas where enhanced fire-safe construction has gone into affect. The second ordinance involves the expansion of fuel mitigation requirements for undeveloped parcels which currently reside within the Fire Code. The property owners must maintain fuel breaks where those parcels end so that wildfires will not spread onto the lands of another, which is a violation of the Fire Code and a state law.

MOFD is also asking residents to begin doing a fire assessment check of their yards early this year. Look for dead trees and fuel that will carry the fire such as dead brush or overgrown grass. Winnacker noted that Republic Services will provide a second green bin for free, and they will make multiple green waste pickups for free as well. Also remove mulch from within 2-feet of the house. Residents are encouraged to sign up for the Community Warning System ([www.CWSalerts.com](http://www.CWSalerts.com)) for future evacuation exercises or in the event of an actual emergency.

For additional fire information visit MOFD's website: [www.MOFD.org](http://www.MOFD.org).

Reach the reporter at: [vera@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:vera@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA