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POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ISSUING AUTHORIZATIONS TO BURN ON A NO-BURN DAY

On No Burn Days, as determined by either the California Air Resources Board or the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District, the District may issue a permit to authorize burning when denial of such a permit would threaten imminent and substantial economic loss (H&SC, §41862). In authorizing such burning the District shall limit the amount of acreage that can be burned in any one day (CCR, Title 17, §80120(d)). For project burns above 6000 feet in elevation, the APCO may issue a No-Burn Day Authorization without consideration of economic impact, if burn site conditions will allow smoke to adequately disperse and not affect a smoke sensitive area (District Rule 313.3.B).

Applicant Procedure (*Steps the applicant must complete for a No-Burn Day Authorization*):

1. Applicant shall fill out the No Burn Day Authorization Request Form. (*see Air District webpage, http://www.myairdistrict.com/html/open_burning.html, "Exemption to Burn on a No-Burn Day"*)
2. Applicant shall fax the form to the appropriate Air District office and follow up with a phone call to that very same office.
3. Payment of application fee shall be made at the time of request or by any method agreed upon by Air District staff.
4. No-Burn Day Authorization Request applications for weekend or holiday burning shall be submitted to the NSAQMD no later than 1500 on the immediately preceding regular business day (excluding holidays).
5. A completed, valid No-Burn Day Authorization must be in the possession of the Burn Boss and on-site during the prescribed burn. The burn must be in compliance with all burn prescriptions at all times, including the conditions listed on the No-Burn Day Authorization.

Internal Procedure (*Steps that staff should consider before issuing a No-Burn Day Authorization*):

1. Look at local winds. Is there enough of a breeze to adequately disperse smoke?
2. Confirm that the 48-hour forecast was favorable. If it was unfavorable, a higher burden of proof of necessity may be required.
3. Call CARB and ask them for an opinion as to whether there will be adequate dispersion during the time the applicant will conduct the burn. Be sure to address the entire time that smoke will be generated.
4. Find out what the proximity of the populated areas are to the burn and evaluate the potential for smoke impacts. Adequate separation? Wind direction such as to not blow smoke at people? Any sensitive receptors nearby? Is an air monitor nearby that could record a CAAQS/NAAQS violation? Are there public events scheduled nearby during the same time that would increase the number of people possibly exposed or for which smoke would ruin a public event? Never issue a No-Burn Day Authorization to burn on a major holiday.
5. If it's a good gamble to allow the burn, issue the authorization, but emphasize that the applicant will be held accountable if smoke drifts into a populated area and causes smoke impacts resulting in complaints.

The NSAQMD will promptly notify the applicant by phone, fax or email of the no burn day authorization approval status. If the application is approved, then a copy will be emailed or faxed and will be available at one of the NSAQMD offices. If faxes are used as described above, call the applicant and go through the conditions. Have the applicant fax back a signed copy.