

Appendix G
Public Notification
SMP I – Required
SMP II – Required

Public notification refers to any method that communicates burn information to the burn community, air regulators, the local fire authority and to the general public. Public education and media relations are part of public notification. Besides communication plans and informing the public, the intent of public notification is to alert the public so that precautions against smoke exposure can be taken.

To meet the requirement of this element, all burners are required to contact the local fire authority no later than the day of burn ignition. The local fire authority is included in this requirement as a key disseminator of public information regarding fire. Such notification may also be a requirement of county or other local jurisdictions. Notifying the local fire authority should not be confused with assuring fire safety. There are other agencies (e.g., local fire marshal, fire department, State Forestry, etc.) enforcing fire safety, the requirements of which may override air quality considerations.

In addition, the affected public must be notified of each burn project. Affected public means any population within a one-mile radius for SMP I, and within a 15-mile radius for SMP II (unless wind direction is specified, in which case the requirement is when the population(s) is 15 miles downwind).

Public notification can take many forms. It can consist of phone calls, mass mailings, newspaper ads or articles, radio or TV spots, media releases, door-to-door visits, posting flyers at prominent locations (e.g., post office, police dept., information kiosks, etc.), certified letters, or even public open houses. At minimum, one method of public notification must be employed no earlier than 30 days and no later than two days in advance of the burn to satisfy this requirement.

The burner is responsible for making a good faith effort with regard to public notification. Good faith effort means the burner should identify the affected population and select the public notification method(s) that is appropriate. For example, for rural communities a flyer in the local post office may suffice; for urban areas a public service announcement might be more appropriate. Some burners may find that doing a method of joint notification may prove effective, such as a press release from a growers' association. Even if there are no populations within the specified radius, the burner may want to conduct public notification as a means to avoid complaints.

G.1. Definitions

Downwind – in the direction that the wind is blowing toward.

Populations – the total of individuals occupying an area. This includes open campgrounds, single family dwellings, hospitals, schools in use, villages, open places of employment, etc.

G.2. References

Regional Haze Rule

Published in the Federal Register on July 1, 1999, 64 FR 35714.

http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1/fr_notices/rhfedreg.pdf

WRAP Policy on Enhanced Smoke Management Programs for Visibility

Approved by the Western Regional Air Partnership, November 12, 2002.

http://www.wrapair.org/forums/fejf/documents/esmptt/policy/030115_ESMP_Policy.pdf