

**RUTH LAKE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**  
**Policy Handbook**

**POLICY TITLE: Use of Fire on the Buffer Strip**  
**POLICY NUMBER: 6360**

**6360.10 Purpose:** Fire danger is always present in our area; fire danger is reduced but is not eliminated in winter and spring. This policy establishes some procedures to further reduce the threat of fire.

**6360.11 Authority:** According to CDF/USFS, citizens of the state have the right to have warming and cooking fires on private property. Although the buffer strip is considered “private property” by CDF and USFS, it is owned by HBMWD and leased by RLCSD; therefore these two entities have the right and responsibility to control the use of fire as they feel necessary to protect their property. However, any fire that gets out of control is the responsibility of the fire maker, the sub lessor, and ultimately, the property owner. The cost of a response to any fire reported will quickly exceed the required sublease liability insurance amounts. This endangers the assets of the sub leaseholder and both districts.

**6360.12 Enforcement:** The Ruth Lake Community Services District retains all rights to enforce and control the use of fire on the buffer strip. The officers and employees of the USFS and CDF are granted permission to enter and enforce all fire regulations on the buffer strip. Failure to obey any order or request of a District employee, a USFS or CDF officer or employee may result in termination of the sub lease, in addition to any penalty imposed by them.

**6360.13 Permits:** Campfire permits are not required in developed campgrounds. Campfire permits are required for any fire on a lease site. Burn permits are required during fire season for any debris fire on the buffer strip. All provisions of the permit must be observed. Permit suspensions by CDF or USFS apply immediately and without further notice to the buffer strip. Permits are available from the *North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District, located at 2300 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, CA 95501, and telephone (707) 443-3093*. Neither RLCSD nor HBMWD issues fire permits, and permissions from either agency do not imply such.

**6360.14 Definitions:**

**6360.14.1 Campfire:** A campfire is a fire which is used for cooking, personal warmth, lighting, ceremonial, or esthetic purposes that is not within a building, mobile home or living accommodation mounted on a motor vehicle. Campfires include: wood fires, charcoal fires, and portable gas stoves using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel.

**6360.14.2 Debris Fire:** A fire used to dispose of burnable materials. Only natural materials left over from tree or brush trimming or removal may be burned on the buffer strip. Burning of garbage or trash is expressly prohibited.

**6360.15 Liability:** The site renter, the sublease holder, and/or the fire starter are liable for the cost of suppression and damages caused by any wildfire that starts through their negli-

gence. Reference California Health and Safety Code 13009, Suppression costs collectable. Further, the unsafe use of fire will result in expulsion from the campground, or termination of the sublease contract. Sub lessees will be held responsible for the actions of their guests.

**6360.16 Fire Safe Regulations:** California fire safe regulations apply to all sublease sites. Fire safe regulations will be enforced, and reviewed when major building projects are proposed. Reference Trinity County Fire Safe Ordinance #1162.

**6360.20 Debris burning** must be done in a manner acceptable to NCUAQMD, CDF, and USFS.

**6360.21** A valid permit must be in the possession of the sublease holder and available for inspection.

**6360.22** A responsible adult must be in attendance at all times with fire fighting equipment and supplies immediately available in accordance with the permit.

**6360.23** Burn piles must be no larger than three feet in diameter and height, and soil must be cleared to mineral soil no less and an additional ten feet in all directions.

**6360.24** There must be no overhanging vegetation.

**6360.25** Only natural materials left over from tree or brush trimming or removal may be burned on the buffer strip.

**6360.26** Burning of garbage or trash is expressly prohibited.

**6360.27** Fires must be left completely out. No piles shall be left to burn down.

**6360.30 Campfires:** All campfires must be made in a permanent fire ring built and placed for this purpose. Fire rings built of stacked rock are unacceptable.

**6360.31 Day use areas:** Fires are only permitted in day use areas if a purpose built fire ring or barbeque enclosure has been installed by the District. Gas stoves or portable barbeques may be used. Charcoal briquettes or wood left over must be completely out before disposal. If no fire ring is provided, fires are prohibited; they are too often left unattended at the end of the day.

**6360.32 Campgrounds:** Campfires are allowed by permission only in designated sites only and must be maintained within an established campfire ring.

**6360.32.1** If CDF or USFS suspend permission to have campfires in developed campgrounds under their control, the same suspension shall immediately and without further action by RLCSD come into force on campgrounds under RLCSD responsibility.

**6360.32.2** Campfires must be kept small. This definition is relative to the situation, is determine solely by the District or its representative (including campground employees), and is immediately enforceable.

**6360.32.3** A responsible adult must be in close proximity to the fire at all times.

**6360.32.4** A fire left unattended for any length of time shall be extinguished by campground staff and permission to have campfire rescinded.

**6360.32.5** Fires which are deemed to be so large to endanger the safety of the people, vegetation, or of spreading or becoming uncontrolled will be extinguished. If this is not done by the campers, it may be done by the campground staff, and the campers required to leave. If it is necessary to call law enforcement, fire officials, or others to enforce this policy, the camper who is responsible for the site will be required to pay all costs of their response.

**6360.32.6** Any camper who causes damage or whose actions require or cause fire prevention or control response shall be required to pay for all costs incurred in the response by all agencies and individuals involved, in addition to paying for all damage caused.

**6360.33 Campfires on recreational subleases:** Campfires in this instance include the definition in paragraph 6360.14 and outdoor wood stoves or other enclosures which may be installed. Any such enclosure which vents through a flue pipe or similar arrangement must have an approved chimney cap with spark arrestor attached at all times.

**6360.33.1** Campfire rings are an improvement to the buffer strip, and require written permission of RLCSD and HBMWD before installation.

**6360.33.2** If CDF or USFS suspend permission to have campfires in developed campgrounds under their control, the same suspension shall immediately and without further action by RLCSD come into force on recreational sub lease sites.

**6360.33.3** Vegetation must be cleared to mineral soil for five feet around the fire ring.

**6360.33.4** There shall be no overhanging tree or shrub branches.

**6360.33.5** All permit conditions must be followed.

**6360.33.6** A responsible adult must be present at all times.

**6360.33.7** Fires must be “dead out” when left unattended.

Approved by the RLCSD Board of Directors: November 4, 2002.

Revised and approved by the RLCSD Board of Directors 4/12/2007.