

CalFire warns people about activities that could lead to wildfire

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

Fire officials urge property owners to use caution when engaged in activities such as clearing defensible space and burning debris piles.

Every spring, fire agencies remind homeowners of the importance of clearing dead grass and brush 100 feet from homes to prepare for the fire season, but how they clear this space is equally important to preventing fires, according to a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection news release.

The spark from a metal lawn mower blade against a rock can easily ignite a wildfire.

“While it’s important to clear dead grass and brush, we don’t want homeowners doing the right thing the wrong way,” Cal Fire director Chief Ken Pimlott said in a written statement.

Two weeks ago, a wildfire known as the Banner Fire was sparked by unsafe equipment use, charring 5,321 acres just east of Julian in San Diego County, officials said. They urge homeowners to take advantage of this week’s cooler weather to clear any dead or dying vegetation before temperatures rise again.

Officials with Cal Fire’s Amador-El Dorado Unit also remind property owners to be careful when burning yard waste. Citing a recent increase in escaped vegetation debris pile burns, they remind residents that anyone who loses control of a burn pile can be cited and billed for the cost of putting out the

fire.

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