

I would like to offer some serious factors for consideration as you discuss the proposal to impose a Hazardous Vegetation and Rubbish Abatement Ordinance. There is no doubt and no discussion needed to confirm that wildfires are a very real and ongoing threat. Of course we want to do all that we can to prevent them. However, I must question if the bureaucratic mindset of creating another ordinance and enforcing it with more financial burdens on families and property owners is the best approach?

The text states; Under such an ordinance any parcels that are not fully compliant with the ordinance's standards, including partially cleared parcels, can be abated by the County most likely at a significantly higher cost than a land owner hiring a private contractor."

Wow, that is some heavy language. It sounds very much like a Home Owners association.

The text seems to suggest that County government should have the right to go onto private property to manage it to the County ordinance standards; to do whatever County government deems necessary to bring the property up to the standard written by government, then charge the private property owner a significantly higher price, and this would be the norm year after year if this ordinance is enacted?

What about the families who were burned out in the past, are trying hard to make ends meet while rebuilding, yet have not been able to afford to hire someone to cut down the dead trees from the past fire?

What about the elderly who can't afford the cost of clearing their land, are barely surviving financially, yet could be held liable to repay the County at whatever rate the County charges them for cleaning their property?

What about a family tragedy one year where all energy is on an ailing family member so the weed eating only got partially completed? The text states that even partially cleared parcels can be abated by the County coming onto that family's private property, and then they will be charged for the work done, no doubt at a high rate!

Is it the best use of County money to spend it to write another ordinance? Are we, the tax payers, going to have to fund a surveillance squad to drive around to monitor if all properties in the unincorporated areas of the County have complied to the standards written in the ordinance?

In an ideal world, we would all maintain our property to the safety standards and most of us work really hard to do just that.

Isn't there another way besides more government regulations, ordinances, fines, fees and financial burdens being placed on us as tax paying, private property owners? What if the money you would have spent on writing another ordinance was used for education and encouragement for homeowners to learn about "best management practices and available science to address risks" as the text says? What if the vast amount of time and money that would be necessary to enforce this proposal to go onto and clear private property was put toward creating a grant fund to aid people who need help to remove fire hazards on their property?

I ask that you think outside the laws, ordinances and governmental financial fees box as you discuss the topic of managing fire risk on private property in our County.

Thank you,

Teri Crowhurst