

Santa Barbara City Fire Department - Standard Operating Procedures Emergency Operations	Code: E-IV-4
Santa Barbara City Red Flag Warning Plan	
Chpt: IV Wildland	Revised: 6/6/17 Pages: 8

I. PURPOSE

A. Santa Barbara City Fire Department (STB) is a key agency in the implementation of the Santa Barbara County Red Flag Warning Plan. The Santa Barbara County Red Flag Warning Plan (SBC_RFWP) is available through the following link: [Santa Barbara County Red Flag Warning Plan](#).

B. STB provides Mutual Aid and Immediate Aid Response in the South Coast area and will be affected by a declaration of a Red Flag Warning (RFW) within SBC or surrounding South Coast areas.

C. This SOP outlines the City of Santa Barbara Fire Department (STB) roles and responsibilities for local actions that will be taken prior to and during declaration of a Red Flag within the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone identified as Zone CAZ239 in the [SBC RFWP](#)

D. STB is responsible for coordination of all Departments within the City of Santa Barbara and any organized citizens groups defined by STB.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Fire Weather Zone - The City of Santa Barbara lies within the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone (CAZ239). See SBC_RFWP map (link)

B. High Risk Day

Notice issued by the Predictive Services Units located in Riverside when there is a minimum 20% chance of either a new large fire occurring, or significant growth on existing fires within the South Coast Area (Area SC08). High Risk Days are displayed in the 7-Day Significant Fire Potential Product located on the web at <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/predictive/weather/index.htm>.

C. Fire Weather Watch

Notice issued by the NWS usually 24 to 72 hours in advance of a Red Flag Event (i.e. critical weather conditions that may result in extreme fire danger/behavior). Fire Weather Watches, however, can be issued for the first 12 hours of a forecast period for dry lightning. Notices are available at: http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/total_forecast/getprod.php?wfo=lox&pil=RFW&sid=lox

D. Red Flag Warning

Notice issued by the NWS usually 24 hours in advance of a Red Flag Event. Notices are available at: http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/total_forecast/getprod.php?wfo=lox&pil=RFW&sid=lox

Red Flag Warning Plan

E. Cancellation

When the NWS terminates a Fire Weather Watch or a Red Flag Warning, or it expires.

F. Local Plan Levels

When a Red Flag Warning is not issued by the NWS or the SBC Fire agencies, but weather conditions within the City of Santa Barbara meet or exceed NWS Weather Criteria (as listed below) specifically in our area. This may be triggered by a Fire Weather Watch from the NWS or may be due to locally occurring conditions, such as localized Sundowner winds.

WEATHER CRITERIA - ALL DECISIONS BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TO ISSUE A RED FLAG WARNING WILL BE DONE IN COORDINATION WITH THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA COORDINATING CENTER PREDICTIVE SERVICES UNIT.

- Relative Humidity of 15% or less with sustained winds of 25mph with gusts to 35mph for 6 hours or more.

- Relative Humidity of 10% or less with sustained winds of 15mph with gusts to 25mph for 6 hours or more.

Red Flag Warning Plan

III. POLICY

- A.** During “fire season” the On Duty BC shall monitor daily weather and fuel conditions through the NWS and South Zone Operations, Predictive Services to determine fire potential.
- B.** During High Risk Days as defined by Predictive Services, Engines 4 and 7 shall monitor fire weather conditions in their response area by taking weather observations every 4 hours from 8 am to sundown or as changing weather conditions dictate, and relay the observations to the On Duty BC.
- C.** When a Fire Weather Watch is issued by NWS Engines 4 and 7 will monitor weather conditions in their response area by taking hourly fire weather observations or as changing weather conditions dictate. Observations will be relayed to the On Duty BC. The BC shall initiate communication with surrounding jurisdictions to determine if weather conditions surface that would justify a Red Flag Warning.
- D.** If local plan levels are met or exceeded (based on weather observations from Engines 4 and 7) the BC shall notify the Fire Chief to determine appropriate measures to be taken. Appropriate measures may include any of the procedures outlined in this SOP under IV. - Procedures, sections E and F.
- E.** If a Red Flag Warning is issued per the [SBC RFWP](#) for the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone (CAZ239) the On Duty BC shall implement the City of Santa Barbara Red Flag Warning Plan (STB Red Flag Warning Plan). This may occur:
1. When Red Flag weather conditions are predicted by the NWS.
 2. When Red Flag indices meet or exceed local plan levels.
 3. When suppression and prevention force availability are severely depleted due to emergency activity and other incidents.
 4. When other unusual circumstances dictate the need to implement Red Flag activities.
- F.** Fire Prevention personnel may assist during a Red Flag Warning as determined by the Fire Marshal and BC.
- G.** City departments also play a role during implementation of the STB Red Flag Warning Plan. Departments include; Police, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation. Roles for each department are outlined in Section VI. - Role of Affected Departments.
- H.** Organized citizen groups, when provided by the City with the appropriate orientation and oversight, may augment City resources provided they officially represent a participating agency and can be recognized as an official representative. Examples of citizens groups include City recognized Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT),

Red Flag Warning Plan

Homeowner Associations, Amateur Radio Emergency System (ARES) members, and SBC Fire Safe Council representatives.

I. The Fire Department shall provide the necessary information, instructions and supervision to personnel of cooperating departments, agencies and other individuals so they may carry out their responsibilities.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. During “Fire Season” the BC shall monitor NWS Fire Weather Forecasts for the Los Angeles and Oxnard forecast area at the following site:

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/lox/scripts/getprodplus.php?pil=fwf&sid=lox&format=pre>. The BC shall monitor Significant Fire Potential by accessing South Zone Predictive Services Forecast for the South Coast Area (SC08) at the following site:
<http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/predictive/weather/index.htm>

B. During High Risk Days the BC shall direct that Engines 4 and 7 to take fire weather observations every 4 hours from 8 am to sundown or as changing weather conditions dictate and relay the observations to the BC.

C. During a Fire Weather Watch the BC shall direct Engines 4 and 7 to take hourly fire weather observations, or as changing weather conditions dictate. Observations will be relayed to the On Duty BC. The BC shall initiate communication with surrounding jurisdictions to determine if weather conditions surface that would justify a Red Flag Warning.

D. If local plan levels are met or exceeded (based on weather observations) the BC shall notify the Fire Chief to determine appropriate measures to be taken. . The BC shall notify surrounding jurisdictions of any measures that will be taken by the City.

E. When a Red Flag Warning is initiated through the SBC_RFWP for the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone (CAZ239), the following measures **shall** be taken:

1. On Duty BC will contact the appropriate Engine Company to open Red Flag signs in their response districts per the [Red Flag Sign Plan](#). The 6 signs are all permanently mounted at approximately a 14 foot height and need to be unlocked and opened. Lock combination is 1199. Signs must be closed by Engine Company when RFW is cancelled.

2. Initiate notifications by e-mail to City Departments using [the Red Flag Warning Contact List](#) and the e-mail group list and/or the [Red Flag E-mail Notification](#).

3. All burn permits within the City shall be revoked.

4. SBC Fire Department shall make official contact with the news media regarding the Red Flag Warning, and will make final notification when the restrictions have been lifted. The On Call PIO shall make contact with Santa Barbara County to determine if additional information is needed.

Red Flag Warning Plan

5. Fire Stations 4 and 7 shall take hourly (or as changing weather conditions dictate) fire weather observations and relay observations to the BC (observations must include a Latitude and Longitude).
 6. BC shall keep in contact with surrounding jurisdictions on current weather and staffing conditions. BC may provide weather observations to the NWS with weather observations
 7. BC shall relay weather observations to the appropriate SBC BC to help in making decisions related to the Red Flag criteria, staffing, and resource allocation within our zone.
 8. Hoist red flags at all fire stations below the American flag.
- F.** When a Red Flag Warning is initiated through the SBC_RFWP for the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone (CAZ239, the following measures **may** also be taken:
1. Initiate a call back of personnel to staff 1 or 2 Patrol (with 1 to 2 person staffing), and 1 or 2 Engines (with 3 to 4 person staffing). The call back Patrols/Engines will cover areas designated by the Battalion Chief. Their principal duties will be to contact as many people in the area as possible, log both people and vehicles as needed, and be able to report and take suppression action on fires if they occur.
 2. Ensure stations 4, 7, and 2 have engines in district during the Red Flag Warning.
 3. Have patrols and engines place a magnetic Red Flag sign on each side of their apparatus (signs located on inside of Admin Warehouse door).
 4. Notify the On Call Department PIO and have them make contact with Santa Barbara County PIO.
 5. The BC and Fire Chief will make the determination whether to implement specific requirements for each department as outlined in VII – Roles of Affected Departments.
 6. Based on the Chief’s decision for implementation of specific requirements the BC may notify City Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Police Departments of actions to be taken by each department. The notification must clearly define what requirements will be implemented as outlined in section VI – Roles of Affected Departments.
 7. BC shall notify the Fire Marshal to determine if Fire Prevention assistance is needed. Fire Prevention personnel may patrol areas as defined by the BC and Fire Marshal.
 8. Signs may be posted at the beginning of various trailheads within City jurisdiction to educate and notify the public of the Red Flag Warning (Parks responsibility).
 9. Checkpoints may be established to provide the public with information regarding fire prevention and closure regulations. Checkpoints should be staffed by at least two people. Signs will clearly indicate that the checkpoints are directly related to a Red Flag

Red Flag Warning Plan

Warning. Checkpoint staff will register everyone passing by the checkpoint, taking both names and license numbers. Private Citizens may be used at station checkpoints, provided they officially represent a participating agency and can be recognized as an official representative.

V. FIRE DEPARTMENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

A. When a Red Flag Warning is initiated through the SBC_RFWP for the Santa Barbara County South Coast Zone (CAZ239):

1. The BC will be responsible for implementing all measures as outlined in section IV-Procedures.
2. Once the Red Flag Warning is cancelled the BC must notify all parties of the cancellation.

B. If local plan levels are met or exceeded the BC is responsible for contacting the Fire Chief and determining appropriate measures to be taken by the City. Notifications to other City Departments may be needed depending on the measures to be taken. The BC shall notify surrounding jurisdictions of any measures that will be taken by the City.

C. The [Red Flag Contact List](#) will be updated annually by the Wildland Fire Specialist and be linked to this SOP.

VI. ROLE OF AFFECTED CITY DEPARTMENTS

A. The role of affected City Departments, levels of staffing and actions to be taken will be based on current and expected weather and fuels conditions. Discussions will take place between the Fire Chief and other City Department Representatives to establish appropriate levels. The listed levels are to be used as guidelines.

B. Police (PD)

1. During a Red Flag Warning the BC will notify the Combined Communications Center (CCC). The CCC supervisor will notify the Watch Commander. The Watch Commander will then notify the OES Sergeant or his/her designee of the Red Flag Warning and announce the Red Flag Warning at briefings.
2. During a Red Flag Warning the PD may increase the number of patrols in the high fire hazard area by calling back 1 Sergeant and 5 Officers. Designated patrol areas have been outlined (see Attachment 2, Red Flag Police Procedures).
3. If the Fire Department initiates a Red, Green, or Yellow Road Block Condition ([SOP E-XIV-6](#)), the officers may staff pre-identified fixed Traffic Control Points as outlined in the Wildland Evacuation Plan (Attachment 3) or other posts as identified by the Fire Department.

C. Public Works (PW)

Red Flag Warning Plan

1. PW crews **shall** notify the Fire Department of any operations they encounter that may result in a potential fire start.
2. Notify crews and contractors under their supervision of the Red Flag Warning and limit, potentially shut down, or implement heightened fire prevention measures on all operations that have the potential for starting a fire within the high fire hazard area (such as welding, tractor mowers, weed whipping, chainsaws, etc.).
3. During a Red Flag Warning the Fire Department **may** notify PW to shut down road crew operations in the high fire hazard area depending on the type of operations occurring.
4. During a Red Flag Warning the Fire Department **may** require PW Construction Section to notify contractors to shut down operations in the high fire hazard area if there operations have the potential to start a fire or obstruct roadways that may affect emergency response or potential evacuations. If this occurs, roadways obstructed by construction operations shall be opened up and shall allow for clear access of vehicle travel through the area within 30 minutes of being notified.
5. The Fire Department **may** also request PW Streets Division to assist in posting signs or setting up barricades in identified locations if the decision is made to set up fire closure or check points.
6. PW, Water Resources **may** be requested to provide support by troubleshooting any City water system problems.
7. PW, Streets Division **may** be asked to open and close Red Flag signs, but only if requested by the Fire Department.

D. Parks and Recreation Department (P&R)

1. Notify crews and contractors under their supervision of the Red Flag Warning and limit, potentially shut down, or implement heightened fire prevention measures on all operations that have the potential for starting a fire within the high fire hazard area (such as welding, tractor mowers, weed whipping, chainsaws, etc.).
2. Notify the Fire Department of any operations they encounter that may result in a potential fire start.
3. P&R Staff **may** close down any scheduled events at City Park facilities within the high fire hazard area as defined by the Assistant Parks and Recreation Director and the Fire Chief, or their designated representative.
4. The Fire Department **may** request P&R to post notification signs at trailheads and other various locations ([see attachment - Parks and Recreation Trail Sign Locations](#)). Parks and Wildland Division have the approved signs. Trails where signs may be posted include Rattlesnake Trail, Jesusita at San Roque Road, Jesusita Trail at Stevens Park

Red Flag Warning Plan

Trail, Parma Park Trails, and Tunnel Trail. Eucalyptus Hill Homeowner Association will post Hale Park. The Fire Department will make signs available to P&R.

E. Homeowners Associations (HA)

1. The role of HA's is to increase the awareness of the public in curtailing operations that may increase potential fire starts, increase the eyes and ears for the community if a fire starts, and have residents prepared in the event they have to evacuate.

2. HA's involvement with the RFW program is on a volunteer basis. HA's must contact the Fire Department, Wildland Interface Specialist and request to be included in the Red Flag Warning notifications. HA's will be required to develop a plan to effectively disseminate RFA information before they will be included in the RFW Contact List. Contact will be by e-mail only. The HA's contact is also required to notify residents when the RFA is cancelled.

ATTACHMENTS

[City Red Flag Contact List](#)

[Police Procedures and Patrol Areas](#)

[Wildland Evacuation Plan](#)

[Red Flag Sign Plan](#)

[Parks and Recreation Trail Sign Locations](#)

[RFA City E-Mail Notification Template](#)