



OPEN BURNING REQUIREMENTS

As grapegrowers, we are always in pursuit of practices that complement and protect the unique environment and natural resources found in Napa Valley. Often there is no “one right answer” to any sustainable best practices question, but we strive to consider the best and most environmentally sustainable practices whenever we are in the field. We recognize that concerns have arisen over air quality in Napa Valley. As members of the community, we must remain proactive in finding sustainable solutions to minimize negative effects on the environment while farming.

While some operations may opt to use other methods for disposal of removed vines, an affordable and efficient industrywide alternative to open burning has not yet been identified, particularly with regard to pest and disease issues. As such, Napa Valley Grapegrowers continues to keep members current on best practices for vineyard burning to promote the protection of local air quality. The following are the four principles of conservation burning:

- I. Reduce smoke*
- II. Maintain and promote best management practices*
- III. Be aware of state regulations*
- IV. Be a good neighbor*

I. Take measures to reduce smoke

A quick, hot, clean burn is the key to smoke reduction. In light of the desire to reduce smoke the following are offered as suggestions:

- The size and architecture of burn piles matter when reducing smoke
- Do not incorporate dirt into the burn pile as it is constructed.
- Vines must be **completely dry** before burning (required drying time is at least 60 days)
- Beginning after 10AM (required by BAAQMD), burn earlier in the day whenever possible

II. Maintain and promote best management practices

- Knock off dirt from the roots as vines are pulled and prior to pushing them into a burn pile
- BAAQMD requirements call for at least 60 days of drying time to reduce smoke
- Leave wires when pushing vines into piles to allow air space in the pile for more uniform drying
- A pile’s footprint should be as compact as possible and not exceed 15 feet in diameter (base area cannot exceed 25 square yards) and must be at least 2/3 as tall as its base (10 feet). A compact, tall configuration results in a clean, quick burn.
- The prudent use of accelerants may yield a hotter, less smoky burn. For additional information concerning accelerants, see 111.7 of the BAAQMD burning regulations.

- Obtain permit from BAAQMD (see “Cost Recovery Plan” below)
- Be in touch with local fire authority (CALFire) and obtain permitting if necessary

For more information on open burning in Napa County:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_protection/fire_protection_burnpermits

III. Be aware of the following key BAAQMD requirements regarding Open Burning:

- Notify BAAQMD in advance with Notification Form B, ‘Vineyard or Orchard Pruning and Attrition Fires.’ (http://hank.baaqmd.gov/enf/forms/pruning_attrition_form_b.pdf)
- Burn only on permitted Burn Days.
- No Burning before 10:00 a.m. or new material added less than 2 hours before sunset.
- Fires may not be ignited when winds are less than 5 mph.
- Smoke cannot drift towards a populated area.
- All prunings must have dried for a minimum of 60 days. When pruning is done between February 15 and April 30 for integrated pest management purposes, the following drying times shall apply: crop trees and branches over six inches in diameter: 30 days; for grape vines and branches less than or equal to six inches in diameter: 15 days. Only crop debris is permissible to burn.
- No smoke after sunset.
- All fires shall, “burn as rapidly as possible within conditions of safety and minimum pollution.”
- The base area of each pile must not exceed 25 square yards and the pile height must be at least two-thirds of the average width of the pile.

Additionally, growers who choose to burn are now required to comply with the new BAAQMD “Cost Recovery Plan” by adhering to the following:

- Growers must submit a notification permit application to BAAQMD to approve the burning. Permits must specify the amount of material intended to burn over the entire 6 month burning season (November – April).
- Each burning season, a one-time burn fee is required with the submission of the permit application (fee amount pending).
- Once approved, growers will be given a confirmation burn number with permit approval to keep on file.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/Files/Planning%20and%20Research/Rules%20and%20Regs/reg%2005/rg0500.ashx>

IV. Be considerate of neighbors

- Communicate with neighbors whenever possible regarding plans for burning and standards of best practice
- Follow best management practices to ensure the least amount of impact on neighbors and greater air quality

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To Preserve and Promote Napa Valley’s World-Class Vineyards