



Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services

Free Residential Chipper Service Guidelines

This program is intended to help residents create defensible space around occupied homes and reduce vegetation along access routes. We will chip for up to **3 hours** with no charge to the resident! Jobs longer than 3 hours may be the responsibility of the property owner.

DO NOT SEND YOUR APPLICATION UNTIL YOUR PILES ARE COMPLETE!

Things that CAN go in your piles:

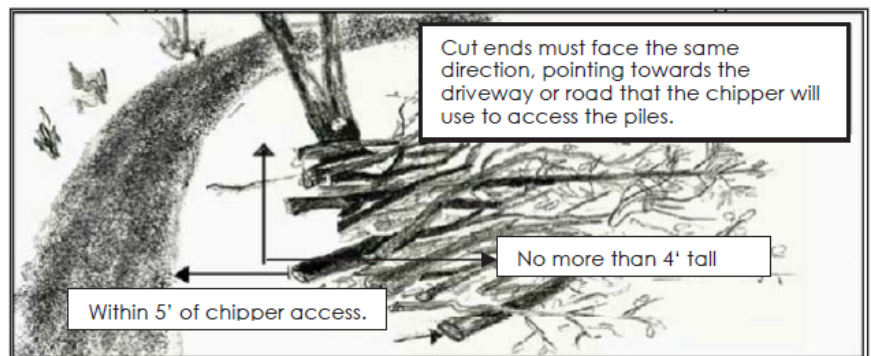
- The chipper can handle material **UP TO 4 inches in diameter** and **UP TO 10 feet long**.
- We should be able to chip a pile about 50' long x 4' tall x 10' wide within the 3 hour limit.
- Freshly cut and stacked materials chip much better than old dry wood. If your piles have been in place for a long time and/or contain a lot of old dry material, our crews may not be able to chip them.

Things that CANNOT go in your piles:

- **No nails, wires or any metal pieces!**
- No roots or stumps
- No rocks, dirt and mud
- No poisonous species or other vines
- No spiny plants, roses or blackberries
- No Scotch/French broom or gorse
- No construction-type wood such as fence posts or 2x4s.
- No rakings or piles of needles, leaves or grass
- **You will be responsible for disposing of any unchipped materials.**

Stacking your piles:

- **Do not make piles more than 4 feet tall.**
- Piles must be stacked with the cut ends facing the same direction, pointing towards access route, preferably on the uphill side.



Placement of piles:

Piles must be placed along road or driveway frontages so that crews can work SAFELY without need for additional personnel, signage or road closure permits. **The chipper cannot go up very steep slopes. We cannot access piles that are not adjacent to an accessible road or driveway.**

- Do not place piles where they might block roadways or access!
 - Do not put piles within 10 feet of power poles.
 - **The chipper and truck must be able to get to a place they can turn around.**
 - Place piles within 5 feet of chipper access, preferably on the uphill side of road or driveway.
 - **If our chipper cannot access your piles, you will be responsible for disposing of your piles.**
- All material chipped will be blown back onto the property in a place our crew deems practical and safe. You are responsible for spreading out the piles of chips.
 - You do not have to be home when the chipper comes.

For assistance with the application or for more information about creating defensible space, please contact us! Thank you for helping firefighters help you in the event of a wildfire!

Phone: (707) 565-6070 **Email:** fireprevention@sonoma-county.org

Website: <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Chipper-Program/>