

CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MANUAL

RED FLAG PATROL

Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council
<http://www.lagunacoastfiresafecouncil.org/>

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Introduction

The concept of being on a high alert stage is certainly nothing new to the fire professionals. When local Red Flag conditions are declared, there is a definite protocol followed by the fire crews in the area. A Fire Safe Council Red Flag Patrol takes the idea of heightened awareness and being extra alert down to the citizen volunteer level. Since Laguna Beach had a devastating fire in 1993 that did about \$500 Million dollars of damage, the people in the area who lived through that event know the signs of danger and the horror that can come when the Santa Ana winds blow. They are naturally alert in those times. However, there are those with short memories or have moved in since 1993. A Red Flag Patrol can help increase their collective sense of vigilance and fire prevention behavior to match the elevated risk situation.

With the cooperation of the local fire professionals a citizen-led and citizen-managed Red Flag Patrol is relatively straightforward to organize and implement. The Red Flag Patrol would be deployed when advised by the local fire professionals that the wind velocity is sufficient and the humidity levels and vegetation moisture content are low enough that a severe fire threat exists. The trained and equipped Red Flag Patrol volunteers would follow designated routes to specific vantage points and watch for fires and dangerous behaviors that could lead to fires. Signs of a fire, suspicious behavior or anything out of the ordinary can be reported in an immediate manner to the proper authorities.

The Red Flag patrol has all the elements any Fire Safe Council is likely trying to convey to their local population. First, the Council does practical things and is thus a credible organization. Second, the Council works with the fire professionals, but is made up of citizens who are willing to take some measure of responsibility for their own well-being. Third, the Council provides resources for equipment, training, manuals, etc. that improves the level of fire safe conditions in the area.

Essentially, the Red Flag Patrol acts as additional eyes and ears for the fire professionals in the area and is deployed at their behest at times of severe fire hazard--days with very low humidity and high winds. The volunteers have magnetic signs and flags for their vehicles and have specialized maps, name badges, cameras, hats all in a ready bag. Their collective visibility will also act as a deterrent against the intentionally set fire. This program exactly fits any Fire Safe Council's objectives by providing a practical step the average citizen can participate in; it will help prevent wildfires, and it demonstrates the necessity of the Fire Safe Council by providing the resources to make the Red Flag Patrol a reality.

Program Development

Once a FSC decides that it wishes to organize, coordinate and implement a citizen-directed Red Flag Patrol, the first essential element is to actually be certain they have the internal resources to have enough coordinators to make the program work. There is no sense getting a program started without the firm commitment by at least four volunteers who will act as the lead team to do the detail work to bring the program into being.

Coordinators have the critical role of contacting volunteers during the various stages of a Red Flag Alert. While the burden can be eased via technology (email, mass faxes, etc.) it still takes an inordinate amount of time to be certain that contact numbers are current and that volunteers are at the right place at the right time. Given that many people have regular jobs, the need for back-ups among the coordinators is obvious and cannot be understated. One coordinator should be available at any given time.

Permission and Buy In

The next critical task is to solidify support and cooperation of all the fire professionals having jurisdiction in the areas to be patrolled. Given that most FSC's have active members from the various fire agencies, this likely may be no more than a formality. However, it is absolutely necessary that all levels of the fire agencies, up to the Fire Chief are informed of and endorse the program. It is also a good idea to be certain that the city or regional administrators know of the program and likewise endorses the participation of the fire professionals under their control. Having the agencies/townships/cities on board is also useful to be able to hold recruiting and training sessions in their facilities.

The Role of the Professional

At this point it is important for the fire agencies to recognize what they are actually being asked to do. First, they must understand that the citizens will merely acting as additional eyes and ears for their departments and will not be firefighters. Second, they should have one or two people that act as liaisons with the Red Flag Patrol coordinators/organizers. Third, the fire professionals may assist in the recruiting process by encouraging interested parties to become an active volunteer. Fourth, training of the volunteers should be done by uniformed fire personnel to emphasize the spirit of cooperation and degree of professionalism expected by the volunteers. Fifth, the fire agencies must be willing to inform the Red Flag coordinators on a real-time basis the weather conditions that lead to a Red Flag condition so that the various stages of preparation can take place among the volunteers. Finally, in order for the program to succeed it is important that training and volunteer contact take place at the most convenient time for the public, not the fire personnel.

To establish credibility the Fire Authorities will actually conduct the training sessions for the volunteers. They must be willing to appoint someone as a liaison between the Red Flag Patrol coordinators and the fire department. This person must also be willing to spend some weekend time to conduct the training program. The Red Flag Patrol community members follow pre-specified patrol routes along the wild land interface that were determined by the local Fire Authorities. The Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council Red Flag Program is designed to complement the official steps taken by the fire fighting professionals with the goal of providing a highly visible reminder to all citizens in the region to be extra careful and vigilant on the days when the Santa Ana winds blow. These patrols also act as additional eyes and ears for the fire authorities knowing that early detection is critically important during Red Flag weather conditions.

Red Flag Patrol Team

The Red Flag Patrol program contains two types of volunteer individuals; Red Flag Patrol Coordinators and Red Flag Patrol Members. It is important to have the patrol coordinators in place prior to recruiting Patrol members or conducting Patrol Member training. There will need to be multiple coordinators prepared to conduct the coordinators duties, in the event that one or more coordinators are out of town or in other ways not available during Red Flag Patrol activation. We found that it was best to have two coordinators working at the time of the initial Red Flag Alert as well as the Red Flag Activation. It can be done with one coordinator however; it is difficult and time consuming.

Red Flag Patrol Team Coordinator Job Description:

1. Coordinates the Red Flag patrol program with local fire agency.
2. Assists the local fire agency in activating and canceling Red Flag Patrols.
3. Advises the local fire agencies of the number of team members patrolling the defined areas.
4. Responsible for relaying Red Flag Patrol information to the respective Team Members.
5. Responsible for advising the other Team Members about the movement of patrols into different routes.
6. Advises the local fire agencies when patrols are operational.
7. Ensures that the team members are fully qualified.
8. Establishes necessary patrol area communications between patrol areas.
9. Immediately notifies local fire agency via 911 emergency telephone communications of any fires or potential fires.

Red Flag Patrol Job Description:

1. Responsible for relaying Red Flag Patrol information to the respective Team Members.
2. Responsible for advising the other Team Members about the movement of Patrol into different routes.
3. Establishes necessary patrol area communications between patrol areas.
4. Immediately notifies local fire agency via 911 emergency telephone communications of any fires or potential fires.
5. Patrol the assigned patrol area until relieved or Red Flag Alert is cancelled.
6. Complete all necessary paperwork and forward to the Red Flag Patrol Team Coordinator at the end of scheduled patrol.

Recruiting Volunteer Red Flag Patrol Members

The next stage of the process is to recruit volunteers to the program. These volunteers must be willing to attend the training and when possible be available for patrol duty. The challenge is that without discouraging anyone from participating, it must be clear to all volunteers that they are not firefighters or policemen and that they are merely acting as vigilant observers during times of increased fire danger. Recruiting strategies will probably be very localized using the resources at hand. Examples of means that worked

for us were to have articles describing the program printed in the local papers along with meeting times and a contact number or email address. We were able to do limited advertising in the same venues to repeat the message. We also secured space at a weekly farmer's market to do some personal selling of the program. We made appeals at some of the local service club's regular meetings. We attended meetings of neighborhood association groups. We used our website (<http://www.lagunacoastfiresafecouncil.org/>) where an entire section was devoted to the Red Flag Patrol. Certainly there are more ideas that could be utilized such as handing out flyers during gatherings of local people (Little League games, company picnics, etc.), use of local access on cable television systems, and whatever else works (arm-twisting a few friends). It is not too difficult to recruit volunteers in an area that faces fire on a regular basis where many people understand the situation and would like to assist in some manner. It is more difficult to recruit in an area with little history of fire and little appreciation of the role the individual can take in reducing the overall threat of fire.

Red Flag Patrol Objectives & Training

Once community interest and involvement with the program were formalized a series of training sessions were held. Each training session consisted of one to two hours of training and were conducted a various times over a 2-3 month period to solicit and train the number of patrols needed to properly conduct the program. These training sessions were conducted by the Laguna Beach Fire Department and the Orange County Fire Authority. These two agencies have jurisdiction over the areas of our patrols. The next portion of this manual is the text of the training manual developed by the Laguna Beach Fire Department and the Orange County Fire Authority for the Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council's Red Flag Patrol. We certainly appreciated all their efforts to make our idea of a Red Flag Patrol a working reality.

Red Flag Patrol Objectives

1. The primary function of the patrol member will be to provide the local fire agencies with eyes and ears during critical fire weather conditions that exist when a Red Flag alert is called by the fire authorities.
2. The patrol Member will be trained on what to look for and what action to take in any given circumstance while patrolling.
3. The patrol member will **not**, posses any law enforcement authority other than that given to the average citizen.
4. The patrol member will have **no** authority to enter fire closure areas, restricted areas, or private property.
5. The patrols will be implemented in those predetermined areas where major life and property loss would result if there were to be a fire.
6. The Red coordinator will supply each team with the required amount of Red Flag guidelines to implement the program.
7. At any given time there must be a minimum of two (2) persons assigned to any given patrol vehicle.

Patrol Area Procedures

1. Any vehicles used for patrol shall have a valid vehicle registration and current proof of insurance in the vehicle.
2. Patrol will commence and terminate at the discretion of the Fire Department.
3. Patrol assignment areas continuously. Visibility is a key component of this program and prevention.
4. Patrol units should stay on designated roadways. A unit that is stuck or broken down serves no useful purpose can no longer provide the fire departments with the eyes and ears of the patrol area.
5. While on actual patrol, Red Flag units will have headlights turned on.
6. Vehicle Flags and Red Flag signs will be attached to the vehicles upon arrival at the patrol area.
7. Be alert to all vehicles and persons in your patrol area. Record all suspicious activities. If possible, photograph the activity.
8. If you should come across a situation that is definitely a hazard to public safety other than a fire, report the situation via the "911" system.
9. A Red Flag volunteer **shall not follow** or tail any person/s.
10. Red Flag Patrol units will check-in with the Red Flag Patrol Coordinator on an hourly basis to confirm status and safety of unit.
11. Patrol units are not to assume any fire control responsibilities. Contact the fire department immediately utilizing the "911" system. Then contact the Red Flag Patrol Coordinator.
12. Each Red Flag Patrol member will be require to fill out a patrol log and turn it into the Red Flag Patrol Coordinator.
13. Patrol units are to make themselves aware of available telephone on the patrol routes.
14. Be familiar with the roads, landmarks and locations within your patrol area for purposes of accurate reporting of fire locations.
15. Traveling onto private property or closed areas is prohibited!
16. The recommended routes of patrol will be marked on patrol plan maps.

Patrol Reporting Actions

Fire

1. **Report any and all fires** via the "911" system. No matter how small. Dialing "911" from a cell phone will connect you with an operator from the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Advise the operator that you wish to report a fire and to please transfer this call the Laguna Beach or Orange County Fire Authority dispatch Center.
2. Make no contact with person/s that may be responsible for the fire. Log the description of person/s seen in the vicinity and report this information to the fire department. (Use the forms provided, UNIT ACTIVITY LOG).
3. **Take NO fire suppression action?**

Off Road Vehicle Activity

1. Report suspicious or irregular vehicle/motorcycle activities via "911" to the local police agency.

2. Do not make any contact with drivers.
3. Note the area/vicinity that you observed the vehicles in. Record this on the UNIT ACTIVITY LOG form. This information may be useful later if a fire does occur in the area.

Abandoned Vehicles

1. Record on the UNIT ACTIVITY LOG form the location, type of vehicle, color, license plate and any other distinguishing information. Submit this information to the Red Flag Coordinator at the end of your patrol.
2. Observe the area closely and make extra passes through the vicinity while on patrol

Serious or illegal activities

1. Record on the UNIT ACTIVITY LOG form the location, type of activity, and the description of any individuals seen involved with this activity. Submit the information to the Red Flag Coordinator at the end of your patrol.
2. Take no action and make no contacts with the individuals involved.
3. If the activity is serious enough in nature, dial "911" and report this information to the local police department.

Fire works / Firearms

1. Fireworks are illegal and prohibited in all of the patrol areas (Laguna Beach, Orange County, Newport Beach, Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel).
2. Report the use of fireworks immediately via "911" to the local police department.
3. Record the location of the fireworks and the description of the person/s seen using or in the vicinity on the ICS-0214 form.
4. Take no action and make no contact with the person/s involved.

Construction / Yard Work

1. The use of gasoline powered equipment next to or in the open space / wildland vegetation areas is strongly discouraged and may be illegal in certain circumstances during Red Flag days.
2. Record on the UNIT ACTIVITY LOG form the location, type of activity, and the description of any individuals seen involved with this activity. Submit this information to the Red Flag Coordinator at the end of your patrol.
3. Take no action and make no contacts with the individuals involved.
4. If the activity is serious enough in nature call the local fire department or dial "911" and report this information to the local police department.

Hikers / Bicyclists

1. Hikers, bicyclists and other individuals should not be in the open space preserves on Red Flag days. The parks will be closed on declared Red Flag days.
2. Notify the park authorities or the local police department if you observe persons off the road in these areas.

Public Relations Citizen Contact

1. If contact by a citizen inquiry, you should advise them that you are on a Red Flag Patrol acting as the eyes and ears for your local fire department (Laguna Beach,

Orange County Fire Authority). Any additional information that a citizen would ask about can be obtained at the nearest fire station.

2. If contacted by a mass media person (radio, press, or TV) refer them to the local fire department (Laguna Beach, Orange County Fire Authority).
3. Do not take any verbal or physical action upon an irate citizen/s under any CIRCUMSTANCES. Remove yourself from the situation immediately. Contact the local police department immediately if you feel threatened in any way. Record any occurrences of this nature on the UNIT ACTIVITY LOG form.
4. The quoting of laws, policies, procedures, fire occurrences and causes or any confidential information should not be discussed with the public. Refer individuals to their local fire department.

Laguna Beach Fire Department (949) 497-0700

Orange County Fire Authority (714) 744-0400

Red Flag Patrol Unit Log

1. The Red Flag Patrol program utilized a (Unit Activity Log) to record all Unit/team activities.
2. The Unit Activity Log form should be filled out at the end of each patrol. Total miles driven and the hours of the patrol should be logged.
3. Additional information and / or observations should be recorded on this form throughout the patrol shift.
4. At the end of the patrol shift the Unit Activity Log form should be submitted to the Red Flag Coordinator.

Patrol Safety Guidelines

The following Safety Factors will be observed while on patrol:

1. All traffic laws shall be obeyed.
2. It is recommended that two members should be assigned to each unit.
3. Hourly safety checks should be made with the Red Flag Coordinator.
4. Headlights shall be turned on during Red Flag Patrol.
5. No alcoholic beverages or any other types of stimulants, or being under the influence of said substance is allowed and shall not be tolerated!
6. Weapons shall not be carried on the person or in the vehicle during Red Flag Patrol operations.
7. Follow the prescribed routes while on patrol. Do not go off road onto any trail or private property.
8. Note the locations of pay telephones in the area, in case you have cell phone problems and are unable to check-in. (Carry change for use in the pay phone).
9. Make sure your vehicle is on good shape and not in need of any repairs. The vehicle shall be properly registered and insured. All drivers shall be properly licensed to operate the vehicle being used.
10. The use of seatbelts is required by STATE LAW.
11. Start each patrol with a full tank of gas.

12. It is important to remember that you are the eyes and ears for early detection of fires within your patrol area. You are NOT to assume any responsibilities as law enforcement official or a firefighter.
13. Smoking is discouraged while on Red Flag Patrol due to obvious fire hazard. If the Red Flag Patrol volunteer does smoke, such activity shall be restricted to within the vehicle with the windows closed. All smoking materials shall be disposed of in the vehicle's ashtray and shall not be disposed of in the environment.

Supplies / Equipment

Equipment Provided by Patrol Members:

1. Field Glasses (Binoculars)
2. Drinking water
3. Cell Phone
4. First Aid kit
5. Food (snacks; optional)

Equipment Issued by the Fire Safety Council:

1. (2) Red Flag Fire Alert magnetic signs for the sides of patrol vehicles
2. (1) Fire Alert Flags for patrol vehicle (with window flag pole)
3. Red Flag Fire Patrol Volunteer ID Card
4. Red Flag Patrol Guide binder containing:
 - Patrol procedures
 - Safety guidelines
 - Reporting actions
 - Reporting forms
5. Disposable camera with flash and film
6. Customized maps with designated routes and fire lookout vantage points indicated
7. Red Flag Patrol caps
8. Red Flag Patrol ready bags to contain all necessary Red Flag Patrol equipment.

Patrol Equipment Costs

The following costs are based on having 100 volunteers, each with their own ready bag. When there are two or more from the same family, then each additional person only requires a new hat and nametag, not a complete bag. Each item required an additional charge for the preparation of the artwork. The Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council would be happy to allow the use of our design and can also share contact information with our local supplier.

Equipment	Cost
Ready Bag (with zipper closure)	\$10 (20" X 14")
Patrol Cap	\$11
Magnetic Signs for Vehicle (pair)	\$18 (15" X 11")
Car Flag	\$13 (14" X 12")
Customized Maps (including permission)	\$15 (17" X 11")
Binder/Notebook (including forms)	\$ 2
ID Badge	\$ 2
Flash Disposable Camera	\$ 9
Total	\$80

Thus in total, we spent about \$8000 to get our trained Red Flag Patrol in a position to be sent on their rounds when the fire department told us it was time to go.

Implementation – Patrol Activation

The decision to activate the Red Flag patrols is always determined by the local fire authority. When the National Weather Service indicates that weather patterns are developing which could result in a Red Flag Alert for your area; the local Fire Authority contacts the coordinators for the program via email and a follow up phone message. The coordinators contact the Red Flag Patrol volunteers using the progressive Stages of the Red Flag Weather Alert. Volunteers are contacted by email and/or phone. Have lists ready. Preference should be stated on volunteer applications. If you have two coordinators working together, one can be responsible for email and the other phone. In our case the majority of contact is by email.

Stage I. Fire Weather Watch

Usually 48 to 72 hours in advance of a Red Flag Alert.

Notify your volunteers that your area is in a Stage I, Fire Weather Watch, give the times and dates of the anticipated Red Flag Condition and ask them to respond as to their availability for patrol duty. Patrols are from dawn to dusk, thus times will differ with the time of year. The anticipated Red Flag Condition could possibly be forecast for a two or three day period, Ask for availability for each day. Patrols are for two hour periods. As volunteers respond, start filling in patrol schedule. (Legal size yellow pad with pencil and erasure works best for me.) Assign those with less flexible times first, and fill in with flexible. Be sure not to put two non-drivers together. One partner also needs to have a cell phone.

Stage II. Red Flag Warning

Usually 24 hours in advance of a Red Flag Alert.

Contact Volunteers with their assigned patrol time and partner, ask them to make contact and to arrange where to meet to begin their patrol. If they are both designated as drivers,

they can determine who will drive. Then they are to standby till Stage III. Red Flag Alert goes into effect or is cancelled.

Stage III. Red Flag Alert

Contact volunteers and ask them to begin patrols at their designated time.

Patrols report by phone when they begin the patrol, half way through, and when they are finished. When they call to begin patrol establish who is driving and the cell phone number to use in case you need to contact them.

As a part of community awareness: When the Red Flag Patrols are activated a general message is sent to all trained volunteers asking them to display the flags and magnetic signs on their cars as they go about their daily activities with in the community, even when they are not on an assigned patrol. They will do this as long as the alert is in effect.

When the patrols are activated somebody should be assigned to call the media. The publicity will help establish community recognition and help with the on going need to recruit new volunteers.

Stage IV. Cancellation

When the coordinators receive notification that the Red Flag Alert is no longer in effect they immediately contact volunteers with that information and cancel all patrols.

Shortly after the cancellation we like to send out a follow up message, thanking the volunteers, telling them of the volunteer response received and how many patrols we were able to put on the road. We also include comments and accolades for the patrols that have been forwarded to us from the community.

Results

The Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council's Red Flag Patrol was a tremendous success as it met all the operational objectives. First, the patrol was staffed and managed by the volunteers. Second, the fire professionals communicated directly with the coordinators to announce the various stages of alert and the all clear. Third, the local media ran stories about the Red Flag Patrols and the volunteers that went out in their vehicles to look for unsafe conditions. Fourth, the volunteers themselves were eager and willing to

participate and several did extra patrols beyond their assigned times. Fifth, several comments from people indicated a general sense of relief and thankfulness that something was being done on the obviously dangerous days.

The Red Flag Patrol worked because of the partnership with the local fire professionals and the dedication of the volunteers. The whole idea is straightforward and logical and might be actively considered by any Fire Safe Council.

Our Story (Laguna Beach Red Flag Patrol)

The first project of the Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council was to organize a citizens' volunteer Red Flag Patrol to assist our local fire authorities when the dry Santa Ana winds begin to blow. Since our community experienced the Firestorm in October 1993, whenever a Santa Ana wind condition develops there is a collective state of jitters and apprehension. The idea of a citizens' group that would act as extra eyes for the fire department was well received. Our goal was to have volunteers trained and ready by Labor Day '02. The back ordered supplies came in the first week of September and we were ready. September and October continued to be cool overcast months just as our summer had been; near the end of November, I was notified that our area was in a Stage I, fire weather watch. I went to the computer and phone to start the process of contacting volunteers. By evening we had progressed to Stage II, Patrols were assigned and standing by ready to go –first patrol out at 6 a.m. if needed. By 9 a.m. the next morning we went to Stage IV, cancellation. We had two other similar occurrences during November, but that was it, patrols went out on two occasions for only a part of the day. Each time we were pleased with the response from the volunteers and things were getting easier on the dispatching end due to on-the-job-training.

On Dec. 18 the, Fire Season was declared over and we were just a little smug about how easy and successful our first season had been. We had reached our goal and had established community recognition in the process. Time to put the ready bags away till next season.

Mother Nature wasn't going to let us off quite so easy!! In January she produced hot weather and wind events that jolted us back into action. These wind events progressed through the weather watch stages rapidly. On one particular morning fires were burning in Riverside and Los Angeles counties, but when I checked at 8 a.m. our area was still in a Stage I, Fire Weather Watch. About 10 a.m., I received a call from the fire department announcing a Stage III, Red Flag Alert and asking how soon we could have patrols out. I sent a high priority email to volunteers, and another coordinator started making phone calls. By noon the first Red Flag Patrol was on the road and the Red Fire Alert flags were whipping in the wind up and down Coast Highway and Laguna Canyon Road. An impressive sight that was hard to miss. The patrols & flags were out over a two day period during this wind event and again shortly after for another two day period during the next wind event. This time around we were visible and really caught the attention of the community. At the end of their patrol one team, still wearing their Red Flag Patrol hats, stopped by the bank and were treated as celebrities; both employees and customers

were thanking them for being a part of the patrol. Other teams reported waves and ‘thumbs-up’ as they went by. One team was consulted regarding weather conditions and the advisability of mountain biking in the canyons. Another patrol was stopped by the media, for an “on-the-spot” interview. We had demonstrated our concept of a citizens’ Red Flag Patrol and how it could operate in an urban setting to assist the local fire fighters; plus, we gained the respect of the community and the fire professionals in the process.

Email sent by Mark Baker, Battalion Chief, Laguna Beach Fire Department.

At this time (Tues. 01/07m 2:00 p.m.) we are CANCELLING the Red Flag Alert and Patrols. Again we want to thank everyone for their participation. We continually get positive comments here at City hall about the patrol Volunteers and about the Red Flags in front of the various business and how great a program it is. Kudos to one and all. Mark.

In general, the volunteers have reported that they have enjoyed their patrol experience; they have discovered unknown areas of our community and have been amazed by new vistas of ocean and canyons. New friends have been made when strangers are sent out as a team. With each activation, fathers have taken off work early so that they can participate, I’ve learned to save the after school patrols for the parent/child teams. Parents are using the opportunity to guide their children into community service. I’ve also learned to be flexible with the volunteers; a patrol out thirty minutes late is better than no patrol.

Pat Cooper
Laguna Beach Red Flag Patrol coordinator

Lessons Learned

Through the development, implementation, and coordination of this community volunteer program we learned some lessons and made some changes as the program matured and was actually put to the test. The following describe some of our experiences, surprises observations, and ultimately some changes that we made in order to achieve the best success possible:

- We found that on most occasions we had far less warning than we anticipated of an impending or real Red Flag condition.
- E-mail communication was very effective, and facilitated easy mass communication to the patrol volunteers.
- With the ease of E-mail communication we found that we could not rely on E-mail communication as a sole means for communication due to lags in patrol members readying and responding to E-mail messages. In addition, there were some patrol members that did not have E-mail or have ready access to e-mail.
- We found the use of cell phones, and voice messaging features to be extremely helpful in relaying messages and getting patrol time commitments finalized.

- We also utilized Microsoft Excel as tool to help sort patrol members availability and preferences. This aided in matching patrol members for the buddy system as well as time availability for patrol member scheduling.
- Communication at the beginning of the patrol was essential to assure that the patrol members were actively patrolling and facilitated the opportunity for the best overall patrol coverage by the patrol coordinators.
- Communication during the patrol was also critical to again facilitate the best overall coverage with the patrol members available at any given time and also provided information on wind conditions etc.
- Patrol activities and success may rely heavily on retired persons and those available during the weekday hours since the Red Flag condition may not occur over a weekend or evening timeframe.
- It is necessary to realize that not all patrol volunteers need be licensed drivers. Since we utilized the buddy system, it is only necessary that there be one licensed driver for each patrol unit. This allows for the flexibility of either non-licensed elderly patrol members or younger family members to make up the patrol unit.

Forms and other Supporting Documents

CITIZENS RED FLAG PATROL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

GREATER LAGUNA COAST FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

P.O. BOX 814
LAGUNA BEACH, CA 92652

NAME: Last First Middle Date of Birth

Address City State Zip Code

Area of city : North Laguna Central Laguna South Laguna Other

Telephone Number –home Telephone Number –work email address

Do you have a Cell Phone? Yes No Cell Phone Number

Are you willing to use your own car for patrol? Yes No

Would you rather be paired with someone who would do the driving? Yes No

Do you have a valid Driver’s License? Yes No

Driver’s license number & state Expiration Date

Do you have current car insurance? Yes No

Insurance Provider Policy Number Expiration Date

Would you prefer to patrol during the: Day time Night time Either

Preferred Partner:

Do you have any difficulty with night vision? Yes No

Have you ever been arrested and/or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor? Yes No
If yes, describe each circumstance. Please use additional pages if necessary.

Signature: _____

*All volunteers must complete the Red Flag Patrol training conducted by the Laguna Beach Fire Dept. and the Orange County Fire Authority before participating in the program.

Mail this completed form to the above address or return it to Fire Administration in Laguna Beach City Hall.

Recruiting Tools:

Recruiting Advertisement 1:



REMEMBER THE "93" FIRE?

You Can Help Prevent Another Disaster

Volunteer for the **RED FLAG** PATROL

In cooperation with the Laguna Beach Fire Department and the Orange County Fire Authority, the Greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council is organizing a **Red Flag** Patrol to watch the canyons and hillsides when the Santa Ana winds blow.

Driving the best vantage points along the wild land interface and out Laguna Canyon Road, **Red Flag** Patrols will report smoke and foolhardy behavior they observe to the authorities. Early detection and deterrence are the goals. All volunteers will be trained by Battalion Chiefs from the Laguna Beach Fire Department and the Orange County Fire Authority and will patrol in pairs on two-hour shifts.

For more information call Battalion Chief Mark Baker at 497.0700 or visit our website for an application.

www.lagunacoastfiresafecouncil.org.

Recruiting Press Release:



NEWS

Contact: David Horne
949-494-5157

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RED FLAG PATROL

Laguna Beach, June 1, 2002: Southern Orange County is experiencing the driest spring in a decade, increasing fire danger in the canyons and hills of Laguna Beach and surrounding coastal cities. As a precautionary measure, the Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council (LCFSC) is organizing a Red Flag Patrol to monitor local landscape.

The Red Flag Program as practiced by Orange County has four progressive stages. Stage I is a Fire Weather Watch issued 48 to 72 hours in advance of a Red Flag Alert that alerts volunteers of a watch condition. In Stage II, a Red Flag Warning, volunteers are notified of their patrol duty 24 hours in advance of the alert. Stage III is a Red Flag Alert where patrols are initiated. When the condition no longer exists, the alert is cancelled and patrols cease.

Volunteers are being recruited from the greater Laguna Coast Fire Safe Council area to complement the official steps taken by the fire fighting professions to provide a visible reminder that vigilance is necessary when Santa Ana winds blow. Specified patrol routes through wild lands allow volunteers to monitor fires and suspicious activity.

Interested citizens may attend a June 15 meeting held at 10:00 AM at the Laguna Beach City Hall where volunteer activities will be explained in detail. Additional information and application forms are available on line at lagunacoastfiresafecouncil.org.

The LCFSC is a nonprofit public benefit corporation whose purpose is to analyze, plan, coordinate and manage available resources to reduce fire hazards and improve public safety through education and community projects.

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Red Flag Patrol Equipment

Red Flag Patrol Ready Bag (20" X 14")



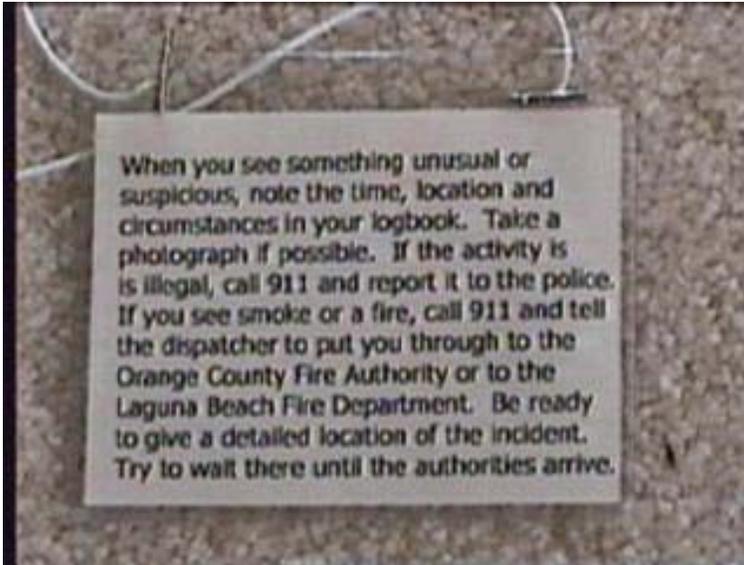
Red Flag Patrol Cap



Red Flag Patrol ID Badge (Front)



Red Flag Patrol ID Badge (Back)



Red Flag Patrol Vehicle Flag (Flag 14" X 12")



Red Flag Patrol Magnetic Vehicle Placard (15" X 11")



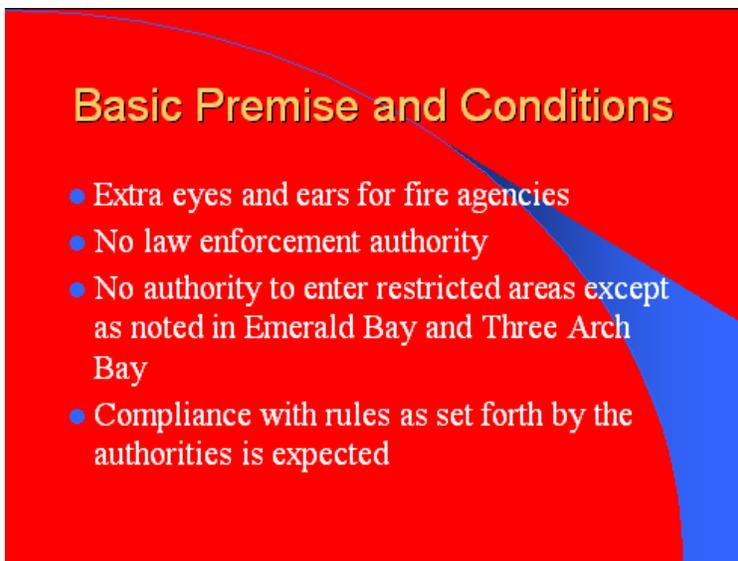
Customized Color Patrol Maps (cover & pages 17" X 11")



Customized Color Patrol Maps (example)



Sample Red Flag Patrol PowerPoint Training Slides



Patrol Area Procedures

- Complete procedures on Page 4 & 5
- MANDATORY THAT DRIVER HAVE VALID INSURANCE, LICENSE AND REGISTRATION
- Wear your hat and ID Badge on patrol
- Display vehicle signs when on patrol
- Use your headlights--obey all traffic laws
- Stay on roads—no off-road action
- Take notes, but DO NOT FOLLOW anyone

Patrol Reporting Procedures

- Illegal activities—Call 911 and report it to the police
- Fire or Smoke—Call 911 and tell the operator to put you through to the Laguna Beach Fire Department or the Orange County Fire Authority
- Be prepared to give exact location and circumstances—use the maps provided
- Other suspicious activities—note time, location, circumstances, take a photo
- Take complete notes in your Log—ICS-214

What to Look For

- Fire or Smoke—Call 911
- Fireworks/Firearms Discharge—Call 911
- Illegal/Suspicious Activities—Maybe call 911
- Off-Road Activity—Note in log
- Abandoned Vehicles—Note in log
- Construction/Hazardous Yardwork—Note in log
- Open Space Hikers and Bikers—Note in log
- Anything else that does not look right—Note in log

Citizen Contact

- Briefly explain the purpose of the Red Flag Patrol as extra “Eyes and Ears” for the fire agencies
- Tell them to contact Laguna Fire or Orange County Fire Authority for more information
- If media contacts are made, refer them to Laguna Fire or Orange County Fire Authority
- Encourage interested parties to join Red Flag Patrol as a fellow volunteer—Give them an application
- Leave the scene if others become irate and/or argumentative—Note in log

Conclusion

- Volunteer SAFETY is our Number 1 concern
- DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER
- Drive Carefully
- Complete your logs and return them in a timely manner
- Thanks so much for being a part of something that is making a real difference in the safety and security of the whole region

QUESTIONS????