

# CHIPPER PROGRAM GUIDELINES



## Things that CAN go in your pile:

- The Chipper Program is intended for trees and brush cut to create or maintain defensible space.
- The chipper can handle trees or brush up to 4-inches in diameter and up to 10-feet long.
- 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 pile:

- No nails, wires, or any metal pieces!
- No roots or stumps.
- No Poison Oak or other poisonous species.
- No vines or materials entangled with vines.
- No Oleander.
- No bamboo or fibrous materials such as palm tree fronds.
- No spiny plants, roses, or blackberries.
- No Scotch/French broom or gorse.
- No construction-type wood (Example: fence posts or 2x4s).
- No rocks, dirt, and/or mud.
- No rakings or piles of needles, leaves, and/or grass.
- No fire debris, burned logs, branches, or trees from past fires.
- No firewood or logs cut into wood rounds.
- No wood older than a year.
- You WILL be responsible for disposing of any unchipped materials.

## Placement of Piles

Piles must be placed along road or driveway frontages so that crews can work safely without the need for additional personnel, signage, or road closure permits. The crew will not chip piles that are more than 10-feet from an accessible road or driveway. The chipper cannot go up very steep slopes.

- 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 10-feet of chipper access, preferably on the uphill side of the road or driveway. Crews should not have to drive off the driveway or work around obstructions.
- If our chipper cannot access your piles, your application will be denied.
- Disposal of any unchipped material is the responsibility of the property owner.
- All material chipped will be blown back onto the property in a place the crew deems practical and safe. You are responsible for spreading out the piles of chips. Special accommodations for chip locations will be the determination of the chipping crew.
- The crew has the right to deny chipper service when the application or service area is outside the scope of the program or does not meet the guidelines of the free Chipper Program.

## Stacking Your Piles

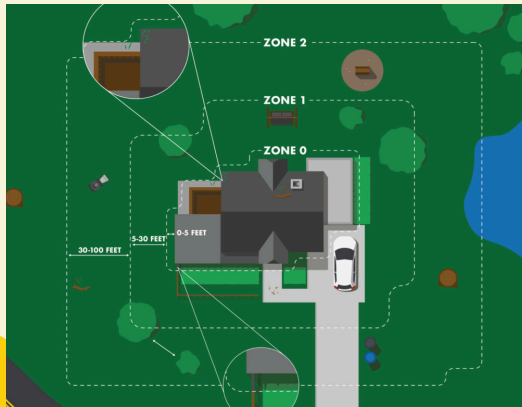
- Piles must be no more than 3-feet tall, 10-feet wide, and with rows no longer than 50-feet.
- The chipper can chip wood up to 10-feet long and 4-inches in diameter. It is quicker for the crew to chip one 10-foot branch than multiple short lengths. Materials should be between 4-feet long and 10-feet long.
- Piles must be stacked with the cut ends facing the same direction, pointing towards the access route, preferably on the uphill side.
- Do not use large equipment, such as tractors or bobcats, to stack piles.
- When your piles are complete, take digital photos of your pile(s) to submit along with your application.



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SONOMA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT  
**CHIPPER PROGRAM**

*In the event of a wildfire, having 100 feet or more of defensible space has been clearly demonstrated to help save homes. Likewise, thinning vegetation on access roads can make it safer for residents and firefighters. We hope that free chipper services can help residents dispose of woody debris and assist them in creating beautiful, healthy, and “firewise” landscapes around homes and on roadsides.*



*The Sonoma Valley Fire District in cooperation with Permit Sonoma Fire Prevention Division provides free chipper services to residents who are engaged in making their property more wildfire safe. The purpose of the program is to create defensible space, specifically around the home, structures, and access routes to the structures, for properties located in the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. For unimproved properties, woody debris generated from areas within 30 feet of a structure or 20 feet from a roadway also qualifies for the program. Services such as fuel breaks, fuel management, and defensible space greater than 100 feet from structures and 20 feet from edges of access roads to those structures fall outside the scope of the program.*



**COMPLETE THESE STEPS BEFORE YOU SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR CHIPPING SERVICES:**

- 1. Follow all Chipper Program Guidelines to meet the requirements for application approval.*
- 2. Place pile(s) per the wood pile location and pile placement guidelines (you will need to add this information to your application).*
- 3. Note the woodpile (s) length, width, and height (you will need to add this information to your application).*
- 4. Visit [sonomavalleyfire.org](http://sonomavalleyfire.org) to apply.*

