

# Fire Prevention in Green Waste Piles

**Did You Know?** Fires occur every year in the county due to unmonitored green waste piles. These fires can burn for days and can result in costly clean ups, damage to the environment, and a strain on our fire response personnel.

Green waste includes but is not limited to: Tree trimmings, palm fronds, grass clippings, manure, mulch, and compost. If green material is left in piles for a long period of time, with the right conditions, it will start to decompose creating a fire.



## How Does a Fire Start in a Pile?

Decomposition will begin in as short as a week. The natural bacteria in the green waste pile combine with water and oxygen to generate heat as the material decomposes. Left unchecked, there is a high potential that a pile will get hot enough to create fire.



## In Order to Prevent Fires:

- Spread green material as soon as you can but no more than 12 inches deep.
- If you have piles that are not being spread, keep pile heights at or below your eye level. It's important that you are able to see the top of the pile for the appearance of any smoke or evidence of burning in the material.
- Maintain pile temperatures low. Remember, decomposition can start in the first week.



## Be Safe!

Smoldering piles should be approached with caution. You cannot tell how much heat is below the surface! Call 911 if you suspect a fire.

## Dispose Of Material Properly:

If your landscaping or agricultural activities generate more green waste than you are able to manage you can take the material to one of the sites listed on the back of this flyer for proper processing.

Remember, land owners are responsible for green waste applied to or found on their land. Use Best Management Practices listed above to reduce the potential of fires on your property.

To learn more, contact [LEA@rivco.org](mailto:LEA@rivco.org) or (888) 722-4234

