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# THE Valley Springs NEWS

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## Fire prevention ordinance going to supervisors

By Nick Baptista

A fire prevention ordinance for the communities of west Calaveras is close to final consideration.

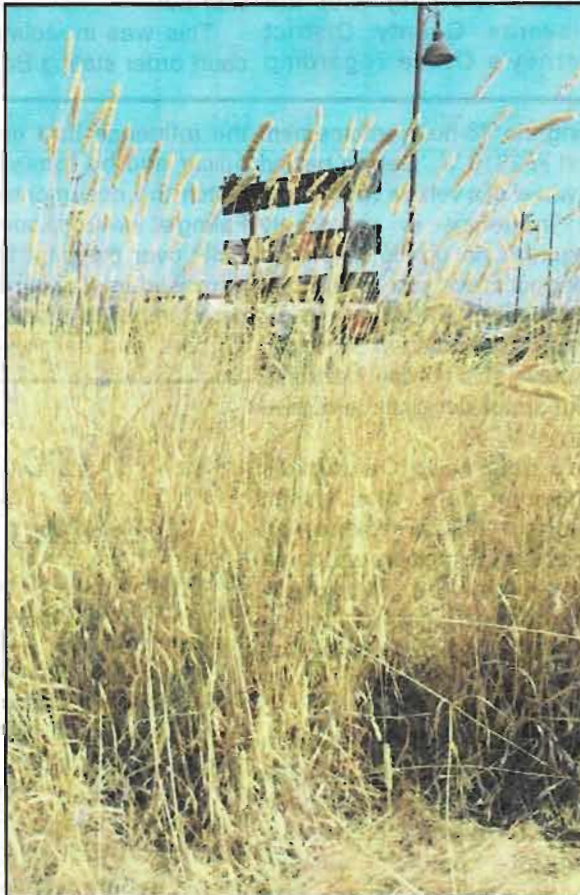
The Calaveras Consolidated Fire Protection District Board of Directors last week voted 7-0 to recommend approval of the ordinance by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors.

The proposal could reach the Board of Supervisors as early as next week for adoption.

The necessity for such an ordinance was identified more than a decade ago after the 2004 Pattison Fire in west Calaveras that destroyed 17 homes in the Burson and Rancho Calaveras areas.

CalCo Fire serves the communities of Burson, Jenny Lind, Rancho Calaveras, Valley Springs and Wallace, an area of 163 square miles with more than 15,000 residents.

A major focus of the proposed ordinance is mitigating the build up of "fuel loads" such  
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**Removing potential fire hazards such as these tall weeds near the entrance to Valley Springs sign are addressed in a fire prevention ordinance under consideration.**

## Heat wave in holiday weekend forecast

The Calaveras County Health Officer has issued a heat advisory as high temperatures have been forecast for the county in the coming days.

Temperatures of 100 degrees or more are forecasted from Saturday, Sept. 5, through Tuesday, Sept. 8. While heat-related deaths and illnesses are preventable, more than 600 people in the United States are killed by extreme heat every year. The warning signs of heat illness include heavy sweating, cramps, headache, nausea or vomiting, tiredness, weakness, dizziness and fainting.

"It's important that you don't overestimate what you can do when there are high temperatures," said said Dr. Dean  
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# Fire

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as weeds and other vegetation on both unimproved and improved parcels.

Without the ordinance, CalCo Fire Chief Rich Dickinson said he lacks the legal authority to compel a property owner to clear their property if they have overgrown weeds and other vegetation that pose a fire danger to their neighbors.

The only leverage he has at this time is to write a letter to the property owner asking them to clear their property.

To put teeth into the chief's authority, there is a fee and fine schedule.

"We want to help the

community, we're not trying to tax the community," Dickinson said about the financial penalties.

Fines would be the last resort, he added. Instead, the district will work with property owners and if they take steps to comply, there will be no necessity to issue fines.

The entire ordinance and background materials can be viewed at the CalCo website: [www.calcofire.org](http://www.calcofire.org).

The next Calaveras County Board of Supervisors meeting is scheduled for 8 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8, in the Board Chambers, 891 Mountain Ranch Road in San Andreas.

As of presstime, the agenda had not been released confirming whether the proposed ordinance would be considered next week or in the future.

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