

Cypress Ranch Water Control and Improvement District No. 1

Policy for Resident Access for Clearing District-Owned Green Space for Wildfire Protection

This Policy for Resident Access for Clearing District-Owned Green Space for Wildfire Protection (the "Policy") shall govern the access and clearing of land owned by Cypress Ranch Water Control and Improvement District No. 1 (the "District") by residents within the District. The purpose of this Policy is to allow residents within the District to perform limited vegetation clearing on District-owned land adjacent to their homes for the purpose of reducing the risk of damage to homes by a wildfire occurring in the greenbelt areas within the District.

THIS POLICY DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE CLEARING OF DISTRICT-OWNED LAND TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO PRIVATELY-OWNED RESIDENTIAL LOTS FOR LANDSCAPING, CONSTRUCTING SWIMMING POOLS, CONSTRUCTING STRUCTURES, OR ANY OTHER PROJECT ON RESIDENTIAL LOTS. THIS POLICY DOES NOT ALLOW FOR ENTRY OF VEHICLES OR CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ON DISTRICT-OWNED LAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF LANDSCAPING, CONSTRUCTING SWIMMING POOLS, CONSTRUCTING STRUCTURES, OR ANY OTHER PROJECT ON LAND THAT IS NOT OWNED BY THE DISTRICT.

THIS POLICY RELATES SOLELY TO LAND OWNED BY THE DISTRICT. SOME OF THE RESIDENTIAL LOTS WITHIN THE DISTRICT ARE LOCATED ADJACENT TO PRIVATELY-OWNED UNDEVELOPED LAND. THIS POLICY DOES NOT AUTHORIZE CLEARING OF VEGETATION ON LAND THAT IS NOT OWNED BY THE DISTRICT.

Access and Clearing of Green Space: Recommended Actions

1. District-Owned Green Space Clearing Area: The allowable District-owned green space clearing area shall be limited to fifty (50) feet of the District-owned green space that is adjacent to and directly behind a platted lot and District-owned green space adjacent to and directly on the sides of a platted lot and shall not exceed one half of the distance between the lots. When another platted lot is located behind and less than one hundred feet from a rear lot line, the clearing distance shall not exceed one half of the distance between the lots. A resident of the District may clear only the District-owned green space that is adjacent to and directly behind a platted lot that the resident owns or leases, or District-owned green space that is adjacent to and directly on the sides of a platted lot. When lots are aligned at an angle, residents are cautioned to coordinate with their neighbors, as some residents may not agree with clearing the District-owned green space area immediately adjacent to their lot.
2. District-Owned Green Space Brush and Grass Clearing: Residents of the District may clear foliage, vegetation, low-lying shrubs, downed limbs, and brush, as well as trim the grass regularly within in the prescribed District-owned green space clearing area. For wildfire mitigation, it is suggested that grass be kept less than twelve (12) inches high.
3. District-Owned Green Space Tree Clearing: Residents of the District may remove cedar trees (Ashe juniper) of any diameter within the prescribed District-owned green space clearing area. Residents of the District may remove trees, other than oak trees, which are six (6) inches in diameter or smaller, within the prescribed District-owned green space clearing area. Other than cedar trees, trees measuring larger than six (6) inches in diameter shall not be removed from any District-owned land. The diameter of a tree shall be measured at the height of three (3) feet above ground level.

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4. District-Owned Green Space Tree Trimming: Residents of the District may trim, prune, and limb all trees within the prescribed District-owned green space clearing area, up to a maximum of six (6) feet above ground level. Pruning and trimming of oak trees shall only be conducted before February 1 or after June 30 during any year. Residents are encouraged to follow the Pruning Guidelines for Prevention of Oak Wilt as specified in *Appendix 1*. Residents shall not prune or trim oak trees in the District-owned green space from February 1 through June 30 of a given year.
5. Waterway Buffer Zones. Clearing or trimming brush or trees within a waterway buffer zone that is located on District-owned green space must be conducted according to the guidelines contained in the LCRA Property Owner's Guide to Buffer Zones. The LCRA defines a buffer zone as the area of natural vegetation, which can include grass, shrubs and trees, adjacent to a river, creek or natural drainage way that separates the waterway from developed areas such as lawns, buildings, roads and driveways. The recorded plats for the West Cypress Hills Subdivision that designate waterway buffer zones are listed in *Appendix 2*. The LCRA Property Owner's Guide to Buffer Zones is included in *Appendix 3*.
6. Plant Waste Disposal. Plant and brush waste should be disposed of outside of the District-owned green space areas. Texas Disposal Systems (TDS) will pick up bundled brush upon request. When feasible, residents may dispose of plant waste in the District-owned green space by means of chipping, shredding, or sheet composting.

Access and Clearing of District-Owned Green Space: Prohibited Actions

The following actions are prohibited unless written permission is obtained from the General Manager or another Designated Representative of the District.

1. Herbicides or Pesticides: The use of any form of herbicides or pesticides in any District-owned green space is prohibited.
2. Erosion Protection: Moving, removing, or otherwise tampering with any erosion protection in District-owned green space is prohibited.
3. Natural Drainage: Modifying the existing natural rainfall runoff in any District-owned green space is prohibited.
4. Oak Trees: Oak trees in the District-owned green space of any diameter shall not be cut down or removed, except those that are diseased or dead. Pruning oak trees is recommended.
5. Non-Native Plants: Non-native grasses, shrubs, flowers, trees, or cactus shall not be planted in the District-owned green space.
6. Non-Natural Appearance: Grasses, shrubs, flowers, trees, soil, or rocks shall not be planted or organized in a manner that would give the District-owned green space a non-natural appearance. Residents and other persons shall not build tree houses, erect ladders or swings, or install furniture, fire-pits, deer feeders, and other unnatural items in the District-owned green space.
7. Fences: Fences or boundaries of any type shall not be erected on installed in the District-owned green space.

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8. Brush Piles: Residents and other persons shall not store foliage, vegetation, or brush from clearing anywhere on District-owned green space. Disposal of plant and brush waste in piles in the District-owned green space is prohibited. Plant and brush waste may be disposed of by mechanically shredding and spreading the contents evenly over the ground, provided the ground is not a waterway, or provided the ground is not an area that is periodically mowed by the District.
9. Fires and Burning: Residents shall not burn foliage, trees, tree limbs, vegetation, or brush piles from clearing anywhere on District-owned green space.
10. Excavation: Residents and other persons shall not excavate (dig) or borrow soil anywhere on District-owned green space.
11. Waste Disposal. Residents and other persons shall not discard or dump non-plant waste, refuse, rocks, soils, construction debris, or excavation spoils anywhere on District-owned green space.
12. Natural Terrain: Rocks shall not be moved in District-owned green space except to facilitate mowing.

Appendix 1

References

1. Firewise Guide to Landscape and Construction
www.Firewise.org
2. Pruning Guidelines for the Prevention of Oak Wilt
http://www.texasoakwilt.org/Professionals/ISATTFSOakwiltpruningofficial_v2.pdf

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Appendix 2

Recorded Plats Containing Waterway Buffer Zones

<u>Subdivision</u>	<u>Instrument #</u>	<u>Date filed</u>
West Cypress Hills Phase One Section Four A	201100168	10/13/2011
West Cypress Hills Phase Two Section Three	201400218	09/26/2014
West Cypress Hills Phase One Section Six	201700096	04/12/2017
West Cypress Hills Phase Two Section Four	202000182	8/28/2020

Vegetation Management within Waterway Buffer Zones

Care must be exercised when cutting brush and trimming trees within a waterway buffer zone so as not to create areas of bare soil that can lead to erosion and sediment discharge. Groundcover vegetation should not be disturbed. If bare areas are exposed, mulch or soil retention blankets may be necessary to hold soil until groundcover vegetation takes hold. Areas of steep slope can be especially vulnerable. Buffer zones and filter strip areas are not to be “annexed” into yards. Converting buffer zones and filter strip areas into shallow rooted turf grass is not allowed.

Appendix 3

LCRA Property Owner's Guide to Buffer Zones