



**RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

**John R. Hawkins ~ Fire Chief**  
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(951) 940-6900 ~ [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org)

PROUDLY SERVING THE  
UNINCORPORATED AREAS  
OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
AND THE CITIES OF:

January 10, 2013

BANNING  
BEAUMONT  
CALIMESA  
CANYON LAKE  
COACHELLA  
DESERT HOT SPRINGS  
EASTVALE  
INDIAN WELLS  
INDIO  
JURUPA VALLEY  
LAKE ELSINORE  
LA QUINTA  
MENIFEE  
MORENO VALLEY  
NORCO  
PALM DESERT  
PERRIS  
RANCHO MIRAGE  
RUBIDOUX CSD  
SAN JACINTO  
TEMECULA  
WILDOMAR

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Open letter to Idyllwild Property Owners:

In November 2012, larva of Goldspotted Oak Borer (GSOB) were discovered in a dead California black oak tree on Highway 243 near the center of Idyllwild. This invasive/exotic beetle species kills large, mature oak trees and represents a significant threat to oaks in the mountain communities of Idyllwild, Pine Cove, Mountain Center, Poppet Flats, and Garner Valley. GSOB was transported to Idyllwild in oak firewood (or other unprocessed oak wood products) from the GSOB infestation area in San Diego County. The extent of the outbreak is unknown at this time, but you've received this notice because oaks on your property are considered at risk for GSOB infestation. A phone hotline has been established to help answer your questions and allow you to report suspected infested trees or firewood at 951-659-3850. You can also find more information about GSOB and can report on suspect trees at [www.gsob.org](http://www.gsob.org).

Oaks on your property are at greatest risk if you or a neighbor have purchased or imported oak firewood from the GSOB infestation area in San Diego County. Please call 951-659-3850 as soon as possible if there is any chance that they have been exposed to GSOB infested oak firewood from San Diego County. You also can fill out an online form at: <https://ucanr.edu/survey/survey.cfm?surveynumber=9624>. Volunteers from the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council and agency foresters (CALFIRE, USFS, Univ. of California) are available to help you check you oak trees and firewood for signs of GSOB. Local, state, and federal agencies are working to implement a GSOB management plan to protect our oaks, but first we need to estimate the extent of the problem. You can help focus survey efforts by reporting oaks in your area that have shown any signs of decline (recently-dead branches, dead leaves that remain on the tree in the winter) over the last 5 years, including oaks that have died and been removed.

GSOB often destroy the largest oaks (>3 ft trunk diameter) in infested areas, and have been observed to kill from 50 to 95% of the mature oaks (an estimated 80,000 trees on approximately 140,000 acres have died since the year 2000 in San Diego County). The highest rates of tree mortality are in California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Canyon Live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*) are also susceptible to GSOB, but to a lesser extent. Interior live oak (*Quercus wislezeni*) and scrub oaks do not seem to be affected by GSOB. Black oak is a common tree species in the San Jacinto Mountains and make up a large component of mountain woodlands and forests. Coast live oak is the most common oak tree in the foothills below 4000 ft elevation. Canyon live oaks occur from about 3000 to 8500 ft elevation and are the most common oak tree above 6500 ft. GSOB outbreaks could devastate black oak woodlands and the oaks in mixed-conifer/hardwood forests in the San Jacinto Mountains.

This unprecedented die-off has produced a large volume of oak firewood. It appears that some of this infested oak firewood reached Idyllwild sometime before the summer of 2012. For this reason, oak firewood should only be purchased from reputable firewood dealers who obtained the wood from outside of the known infestation area in San Diego County. The GSOB Zone of Infestation map may be viewed at: [http://ucanr.edu/sites/gsobinfo/About Goldspotted Oak Borer 930/Location/ZOI](http://ucanr.edu/sites/gsobinfo/About_Goldspotted_Oak_Borer_930/Location/ZOI) )

Please help us protect the oaks of the San Jacinto Mountains. Your effort now will help insure that the majestic oaks in your community will be present in the future.

General Information on GSOB and firewood can be found at:

<http://GSOB.org>;

<http://ucanr.org/sites/gsobinfo/>

<http://civr.ucr.edu/blog/invasive-species/civr-goldspotted-oak-borer/>

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/forest-grasslandhealth/?cid=fsbdev3\\_046707](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/forest-grasslandhealth/?cid=fsbdev3_046707)

<http://www.rivcoag.org/opencms/quicklinks/GSOB.html>

<http://www.firewood.ca.gov>

<http://www.dontmovefirewood.org>

