



# City of Rolling Hills

INCORPORATED JANUARY 24, 1957

NO. 2 PORTUGUESE BEND ROAD  
ROLLING HILLS, CALIF. 90274  
(310) 377-1521  
FAX: (310) 377-7288

January 28, 2016

## VIA EMAIL AND US MAIL

Jeanie Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: 2/2/16 Board Meeting – Item 7 (Conservation Extended Emergency Regulation)

Dear Ms. Townsend:

I am writing again on behalf of the City of Rolling Hills to comment on the Proposed Regulatory Framework for Extended Emergency Regulation for Urban Water Conservation. I am pleased to report that the City of Rolling Hills, since June 1, 2015 has met the mandate to reduce its water use by 36% so that California can meet a 25% statewide water conservation objective. However, this mandate has had a significant negative impact on the community and poses a real threat to its health and public safety. As the City outlined in its May 4, 2015 and January 6, 2016 letters to the Board, the City of Rolling Hills has characteristics that are very unusual for an urban community and believes it qualifies for relief from the water reduction requirements that the Board is now considering for certain communities.

The 36% reduction requirement for the City of Rolling Hills has already been very onerous and potentially hazardous to our residents and their livestock. Rolling Hills is a unique, rural and equestrian community in Los Angeles County with a population of only 1,860 residents, based on the 2010 census. Our city has less than 800 residences and no commercial businesses. Rolling Hills' water is provided by the California Water Service Company within its Palos Verdes District. Almost all the parcels in Rolling Hills range between 1 to 12 acres in size. It is obvious that a household in Rolling Hills will use more water than almost any other household in the State. To group our residents' per capita water usage to all other urban and suburban communities is simply not comparable and is unfair.

The entire City of Rolling Hills is zoned as "Residential Agricultural" where every household by right can farm on their land. Many of our residents have planted vineyards, orchards and vegetable plots that consume higher than average water usage per capita. Within Sec. 865(e) of the original Proposed Emergency Regulation, you allowed water suppliers to credit themselves for commercial agricultural uses. We

continue to contend that residential farmers such as those in Rolling Hills should also be provided a similar credit by reducing the overall percentage requirement for the entire City. If not, the Board continues to put a damper on local food supply sustainability and destroy a very important local resource.

The City of Rolling Hills' land use development pattern is based on its equestrian lifestyle and heritage. Every parcel in Rolling Hills is required to have an area for a horse stable and corral. The City owns and the Rolling Hills Homeowners Association operates two municipal corrals, which are used to provide the required exercise for horses. Therefore, taking care of horses and other farm animals is commonplace in Rolling Hills. It takes a great deal of potable water to care for farm animals, particularly drinking water supply during the hot summer months. Although California Water Service Company has allowed residents who care for such animals to appeal their water allocation, the Board should provide for a permanent credit because the water needs in this circumstance cannot be compared to most urban households and cutting back water for livestock and equestrian uses is not possible.

The State of California via Cal Fire has declared the entire City of Rolling Hills to be located in a Very High Fire Severity Zone (see Attachment 1). The City has previously suffered through wildfires with disastrous consequences; in Santa Ana wind conditions, our entire City can burn down by wildfire. To comply with the new water restrictions, many residents have cut back their watering of vegetation around their home, which is causing this vegetation to die, creating fuel for wildfire. The City believes it is dangerous that the Board require residents in extremely high fire zones to cut any water to the plants surrounding residents' homes. Such plants provide firebreaks only when they are still alive due to proper irrigation. In fact, Los Angeles County Fire Chief Osby recommended that our residents continue to water plants and ornamental vegetation in an August 21, 2015 letter (see Attachment 2) because they are located in a wildland-urban interface designated area. Furthermore, Governor Brown via a proclamation on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015 "State of Emergency" made it known that many trees in California are dead or dying because they are under attack from the bark beetle due to the State's four year drought. Within the Governor's proclamation, he notes that High Fire Hazard Zones should take particular caution to prevent this devastation due to threat that dead trees cause their communities (see Attachment 3). In Rolling Hills and throughout the Palos Verdes Peninsula, the bark beetle has been killing many trees and increasing the wildfire threat to the region (see Attachment 4). Thus, the current water regulations in Rolling Hills do not provide the residents the needed water allocation to keep all their trees alive in order to prevent a disastrous wildfire.

Finally, the allocation of water budgets based on 2013 usage has been challenging for new residents in our City. Specifically, the formula, singularly based on per capita historical usage (in relation to the Palos Verdes District average), does not take into account unique residential conditions such as home size, lot size and demographics.

State Water Resources Control Board

January 28, 2016

RE: 2/2/16 Board Meeting - Item 7 (Conservation Extended Emergency Regulation)

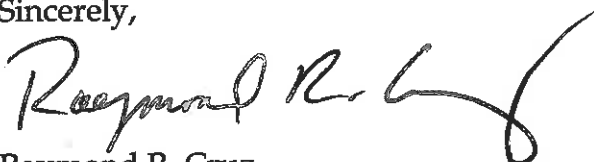
Page 3 of 3

Although an appeals process exists and our water purveyor (California Water Service Company) has been responsive to such appeals, "one size does not fit all" in regard to a 36% mandate and per capita formula. The City advocates that all water purveyors be allowed to utilize the previous owners' information to determine the new owners' budget. In Rolling Hills, due to being categorized with the District's other cities with much smaller parcels, new residents have been provided a water budget that is equal to the District average, when most Rolling Hills residents need at least five times that allocation. California Water Service Company officials have indicated that this is private information and they are not allowed to utilize it for new users. The City of Rolling Hills is looking for relief here for our new residents.

Due to all the above stated facts and circumstances, the City of Rolling Hills believes that it deserves the least onerous water reduction requirements. We are requesting a citywide reduction of at least 8% to a 28% baseline reduction requirement. Furthermore, the City of Rolling Hills is looking for the Board to create a provision that directs water purveyors to utilize a previous parcel owner's water usage history when determining new property owners' individual water budgets who have purchased after June 1, 2013—not the "District average."

If you have any questions regarding this letter or about our community, please contact me at (310) 377-1521.

Sincerely,



Raymond R. Cruz  
City Manager

RRC:hl

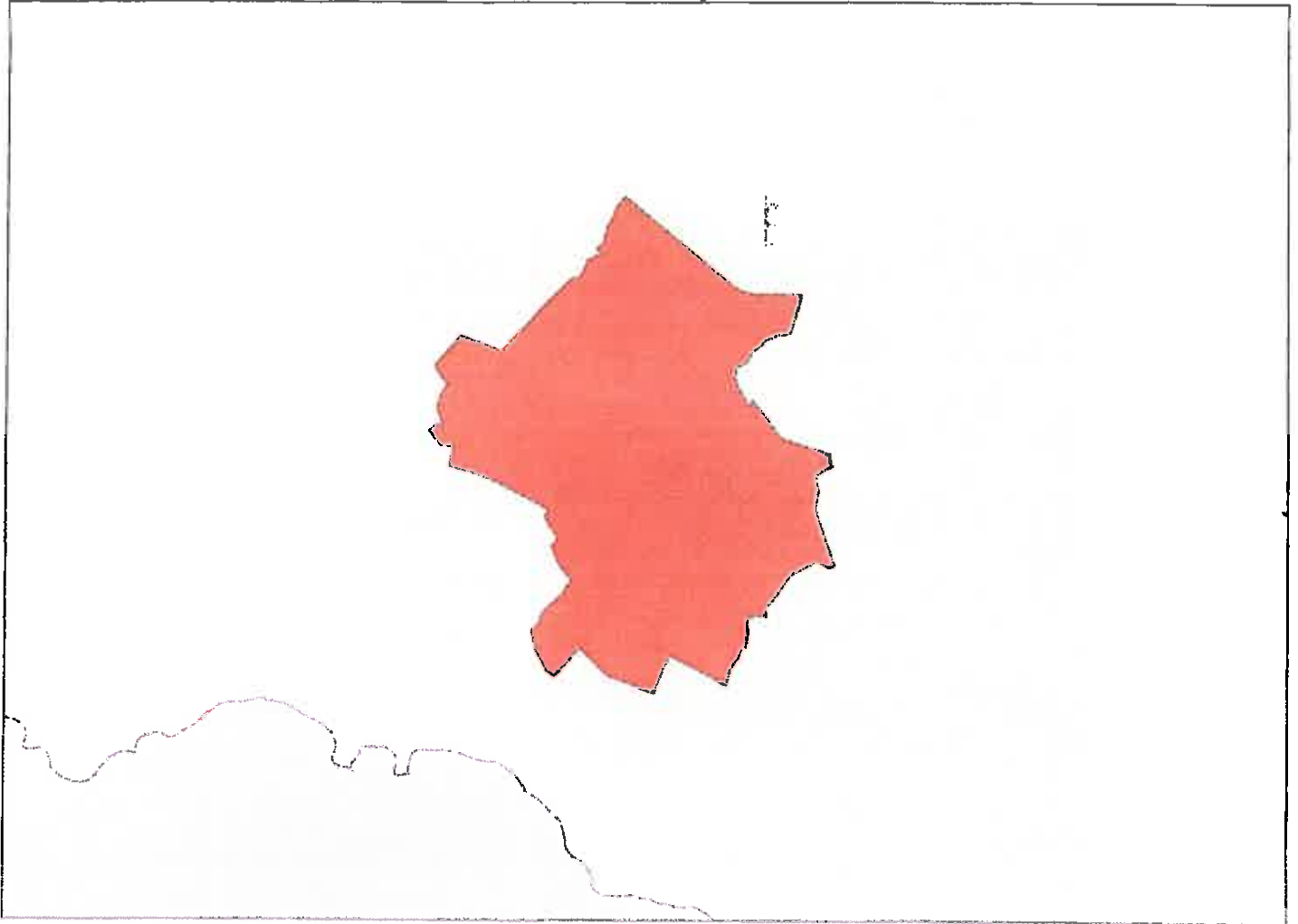
01-28-16CommentLetter\_SWRCB\_RegulatoryFramework

Enclosures (4)

c: Rolling Hills City Council  
Anton Dahlerbruch, City Manager, Palos Verdes Estates  
Doug Prichard, City Manager, Rolling Hills Estates  
Doug Wilmore, City Manager, Rancho Palos Verdes  
Scott Hale, Battalion Chief, Los Angeles County Fire Department  
Dan Trejo, Acting District Manager, Cal Water

# Rolling Hills

## Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA As Recommended by CAL FIRE

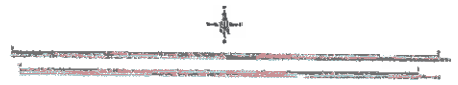


Fire Hazard Severity Zones	
Very High	Very Low
High	Low
Very High	Very Low

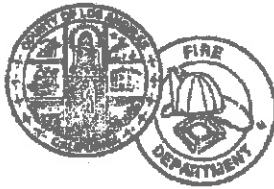
City Boundary  
County Boundary

This map was developed using data products such as provided city boundaries provided by local government agencies. In certain cases, the boundaries may not be perfectly accurate. The map is for display purposes only - questions and requests related to content or city boundary data should be directed to the appropriate local government entity.

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California Tools Alliance, MAD 1000  
Scale 1:50,000  
at 30° N 20° W  
September 2011



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2015

City of Rolling Hills

By \_\_\_\_\_

DARYL L. OSBY  
FIRE CHIEF  
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

August 21, 2015

Dear Residents:

Southern California continues to be one of the most desirable places on earth to live. However, many challenges, including longer and warmer summers, fast-moving powerful storms, and an on-going drought continue to challenge our ability to live safely in the wildland-urban interface areas of Los Angeles County.

The combined effect of years of drought, high temperatures, low humidity, and dry Santa Ana winds have the potential to cause devastating consequences during our fall fire season. As the numerous fires that have impacted Northern California have proven, any fire that gets established near homes will quickly threaten lives and property.

The four year drought has forced all of us to cut back on water usage. However, we would like to encourage those who reside in the wildland-urban interface to continue to judiciously water plants and ornamental vegetation in accordance with your local water restriction ordinances. Proper maintenance and removal of dead material is equally important as it only takes a single ember to ignite dry vegetation.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department continues to take every precaution to protect you and your home from wildfire. In the event of a major fire, firefighting resources will be stretched thin. You can prepare for the upcoming fire season by developing a Ready! Set! Go! Personal Wildfire Action Plan.

The Ready! Set! Go! Personal Wildfire Action Plan is available on our website and provides guidance on retrofitting your home with fire-resistive features, creating defensible space around your home, and developing an emergency plan should your home be threatened by a wildfire and you need to evacuate.

You play a vital role in protecting your life, the lives of your loved ones, and property. Through advance planning and preparation, we can all be ready for the next wildfire. For more information, please visit our website at [www.fire.lacounty.gov](http://www.fire.lacounty.gov), our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/LACOFD](http://www.facebook.com/LACOFD), or call our public information team at (323) 881-2411.

Stay safe,

  
DARYL L. OSBY, FIRE CHIEF

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS  
ARTESIA  
AZUSA  
BALDWIN PARK  
BELL  
BELL GARDENS  
BELLFLOWER  
BRADBURY

CALABASAS  
CARSON  
CERRITOS  
CLAREMONT  
COMMERCE  
Covina  
GUDAHY

DIAMOND BAR  
DUARTE  
EL MONTE  
GARDENA  
GLENDORA  
HAWAIIAN GARDENS  
HAWTHORNE

HIDDEN HILLS  
HUNTINGTON PARK  
INDUSTRY  
INGLEWOOD  
IRVINDALE  
LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE  
LA HABRA

LA MIRADA  
LA PUENTE  
LAKEWOOD  
LANCASTER  
LAWNDALE  
LONITA  
LYNWOOD

MALEBU  
MAYWOOD  
NORWALK  
PALMDALE  
PALOS VERDES ESTATES  
PARAMOUNT  
PICO RIVERA

POMONA  
RANCHO PALOS VERDES  
ROLLING HILLS  
ROLLING HILLS ESTATES  
ROSEMead  
SAN DIMAS  
SANTA CLARITA

SIGNAL HILL  
SOUTH EL MONTE  
SOUTH GATE  
TEMPLE CITY  
WALNUT  
WEST HOLLYWOOD  
WESTLAKE VILLAGE  
WHITTIER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 30, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

California is facing the worst epidemic of tree mortality in modern history. Four years of drought and resulting native bark beetle infestation have killed millions of trees on federal, state, and private land, and millions more trees are currently dying. The United States Forest Service recently estimated that 22 million trees have already died due to current conditions, while other scientific studies identify even higher estimates. Tree mortality across California's forests is putting lives and critical infrastructure at risk - greatly increasing already dangerous wildfire conditions and exacerbating threats posed by falling trees. Today, I am declaring a State of Emergency to respond to this threat.

Several actions by our federal partners can reduce life safety risks to our residents including: providing federal matching funds authorized in the 2014 U.S. Farm Bill for insect and disease designated areas to augment state resources; deploying more technical assistance and program support of the Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist private land owners overwhelmed by the number of dead and dying trees on their properties; redirecting funding by the U.S. Forest Service to remove trees on federal lands adjacent to communities; and expediting federal approvals of emergency actions on or nearby federal lands..

Changes to our forests driven by climate change require that federal, state and local governments think creatively and act aggressively. It is essential to immediately reduce risks from widespread tree mortality while working together to improve the long-term health of California's forests. A crisis of this magnitude demands action on all fronts.

Thank you for your consideration of this request for federal support and partnership.

Sincerely,

  
Edmund G. Brown Jr.

**Executive Department**  
**State of California**

**PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY**

**WHEREAS** the State of California is experiencing record drought conditions, which have persisted for the last four years; and

**WHEREAS** on January 17, 2014, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist throughout the State of California due to severe drought conditions; and

**WHEREAS** a lack of precipitation over the last four years has made trees in many regions of California susceptible to epidemic infestations of native bark beetles, which are constrained under normal circumstances by the defense mechanisms of healthy trees; and

**WHEREAS** these drought conditions and resulting bark beetle infestations across broad areas have caused vast tree mortality in several regions of the state, with the United States Forest Service estimating that over 22 million trees are dead and that tens of millions more are likely to die by the end of this year; and

**WHEREAS** recent scientific measurements suggest that the scale of this tree die-off is unprecedented in modern history; and

**WHEREAS** this die-off is of such scale that it worsens wildfire risk across large regions of the State, presents life safety risks from falling trees to Californians living in impacted rural, forested communities, and worsens the threat of erosion across watersheds; and

**WHEREAS** such wildfires will release thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollutants; and

**WHEREAS** the circumstances of the tree die-off, by reason of its magnitude, is or is likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment and facilities of any single county, city and county, or city and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to combat; and

**WHEREAS** under the provisions of section 8558(b) of the California Government Code, I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist within the State of California due to these events; and

**WHEREAS** under the provisions of section 8571 of the California Government Code, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this order would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the drought.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, section 8625 of the California Government Code, HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY to exist within the State of California.**

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Transportation, and the California Energy Commission shall immediately identify areas of the State that represent high hazard zones for wildfire and falling trees using best available science and geospatial data.
2. State agencies, utilities, and local governments to the extent required by their existing responsibilities to protect the public health and safety, shall undertake efforts to remove dead or dying trees in these high hazard zones that threaten power lines, roads and other evacuation corridors, critical community infrastructure, and other existing structures. Incidental vegetation such as shrubs that restrict access for safe and efficient removal of the dead and dying trees also may be removed. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall issue emergency guidelines setting forth the relevant criteria, and the California Conservation Corps shall assist government entities in implementing this directive to the extent feasible.
3. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall identify potential storage locations for removed trees across impacted areas in partnership with federal agencies and local jurisdictions.
4. The California Department of Transportation shall formally request immediate assistance through the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program, Title 23, United States Code section 125, in order to obtain federal assistance for removal of dead and dying trees that are adjacent to highways.
5. The Department of General Services will identify state facilities, and the California Department of Transportation shall identify highway and road corridors, where woodchips produced from dead trees can be used as mulch.
6. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall work with impacted counties to distribute portable equipment across high hazard zones so that isolated communities can remove and process wood waste locally where appropriate.
7. The California Air Resources Board and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall work together and with federal land managers and the United States Environmental Protection Agency to expand the practice of prescribed burns, which reduce fire risk and avoid significant pollution from major wildfires, and increase the number of allowable days on a temporary basis to burn tree waste that has been removed in high hazard areas.



8. The California Public Utilities Commission shall utilize its authority to extend contracts on existing forest bioenergy facilities receiving feedstock from high hazard zones.
9. The California Public Utilities Commission shall take expedited action to ensure that contracts for new forest bioenergy facilities that receive feedstock from high hazard zones can be executed within six months, including initiation of a targeted renewable auction mechanism and consideration of adjustments to the BioMat Program defined pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 399.20. No later than six months after the BioMat program begins, the California Public Utilities Commission shall evaluate the need for revisions to the program to facilitate contracts for forest bioenergy facilities.
10. The California Public Utilities Commission shall prioritize facilitation of interconnection agreements for forest bioenergy facilities in high hazard zones, and shall order the use of expedited mediation or other alternative dispute resolution processes when conflicts delay development of projects.
11. The California Energy Commission shall prioritize grant funding from the Electric Program Investment Charge for woody biomass-to-energy technology development and deployment, consistent with direction from the California Public Utilities Commission.
12. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Energy Commission, and other appropriate agencies shall work with land managers to estimate biomass feedstock availability, storage locations, and volumes that may be available for use as bioenergy feedstock at existing and new facilities.
13. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the California Energy Commission shall work with bioenergy facilities that accept forest biomass from high hazard zones to identify potential funds to help offset higher feedstock costs.
14. The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection will work with affected counties and existing wood product markets to determine the feasibility for expanded wood product markets in California.
15. For purposes of carrying out directives 1, 2, and 5 through 8, Division 13 (commencing with section 21000) of the Public Resources Code and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division are hereby suspended. This suspension applies to any actions taken by state agencies, and for actions taken by local agencies where the state agency with primary responsibility for implementing the directive concurs that local action is required, as well as for any necessary permits or approvals required to complete these actions.

16. In order to ensure that equipment and services necessary for emergency response can be procured quickly, the provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code applicable to state contracts, including, but not limited to, advertising and competitive bidding requirements, are hereby suspended as necessary to carry out this Proclamation. Approval by the Department of Finance is required prior to the execution of any contract entered into pursuant to these directives.

17. For purposes of this Proclamation, Chapter 3.5 (commencing with section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of the Government Code is suspended for the development and adoption of regulations or guidelines needed to carry out the provisions in this Order. Any entity issuing regulations or guidelines pursuant to this directive shall conduct a public meeting on the regulations and guidelines prior to adopting them.

18. The Office of Emergency Services shall provide local government assistance as appropriate under the authority of the California Disaster Assistance Act, California Government Code section 8680 et seq. and California Code of Regulations, title 19, section 2900 et seq.

19. State agencies shall actively monitor tree removal efforts directed by this Proclamation to assess their effectiveness in protecting forest health and strengthening forest resilience.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 29th day of October 2015.

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
Governor of California

ATTEST:

ALEX PADILLA  
Secretary of State

## Pine bark beetles killing local trees

By Priscella Vega [priscella.vega@langnews.com](mailto:priscella.vega@langnews.com) @vegaprisca on Twitter | Posted: Wednesday, December 23, 2015 1:21 pm

For Michael Dudikoff, the allure of living on the scenic Palos Verdes Peninsula stems from its forest-like setting.

But lately, Dudikoff has noticed an increase in infected and dying pine trees surrounding his home.

This year alone, Rolling Hills Estates removed more pine trees than any other species compared to past years, according to Andy Clark, community services director. The city held a special Parks and Activities meeting last week to address recent attacks on trees and hear Dudikoff's concerns of bark beetles spreading to his area.

Dudikoff was aware of extensive tree deaths in Lake Arrowhead and knew he had to do something when he began noticing the increase in dead trees in his neighborhood.

"The reason I bought my property is because of the beautiful pine trees, but now they're dying and it's really upsetting to me," said Dudikoff, a Peninsula resident for the past 30 years. Clark said the beetle infestation is a topic that comes and goes on the Peninsula. Pine beetles are infecting and attacking trees sporadically — not in clusters — throughout the city because of the drought, he said.

"The beetle issue has been around for a long time and right now it's too dry for pine trees," Clark said. Pine beetles, which consist of about five species, can sense when a pine or eucalyptus tree is stressed by smelling its bark or a cut. Droughts, trimming and inadequate watering increase the stress on trees. When beetles sense a tree is stressed, they migrate toward it and produce pheromones that become sexual attractant to other beetles.

Eventually, bark beetles damage the tree to the point of death. Sap takes over the tree bark, turning needles into a yellow, reddish color. The cycle continues as bark beetles move onto the next tree.

Dudikoff proposed creating a mailbox where residents could notify neighbors of infected and dead trees while suggesting to speak with an arborist for further help.

"Maybe we can try and save trees, but if they're not wanting to do that, we need alternate solutions," Dudikoff said. All cities on the Peninsula have ordinances regarding trees and vegetation usually oversee by parks committees or homes association.

In Rancho Palos Verdes and Rolling Hills, infected trees haven't been a major concern. Residents

typically remove infected trees to prevent beetles from spreading.

Trees are irrigated when newly planted for six months to a year in cities like Palos Verdes Estates and Rancho Palos Verdes. Depending on addresses, watering days vary. Rain from the expected El Nino weather pattern will help alleviate the situation and probably keep the beetles away for a while, Clark said.

It's easy to blame the drought for beetles attacking trees, but Carl Moritz, urban forester for Palos Verdes Estates for the past 16 years, said residents need to do their part to keep trees healthy.

When Gov. Jerry Brown imposed water restrictions earlier this year, Moritz said he "didn't mean to stop watering trees."

Moritz said residents should water trees once a month, letting water sink down about three feet and trim trees only for safety.

"We need our trees to be happy," Moritz said. "You can replace a lawn overnight, but it takes decades to obtain a pine tree of our size."