

Cambria Fire/CERT
Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

Cambria CSD Fire Department
CERT - Standard Operating Guideline

Title: Red Flag Fire Patrol Activation and Guidelines

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Purpose: To provide guidance in activating and performing a Red Flag Fire Patrol (RFFP) in Cambria.

Scope: To ensure that all members have guidelines on when, where & how to proceed in initial activation and during performance of the duties of the Red Flag Fire Patrol.

General: This is the protocol for activating the team or members for duty and the guidelines for their performance.

Cambria Fire/CERT Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

General Information

- **Purpose of the Patrols** - By patrolling areas during critical CAMBRIA Community Services District (CSD) FIRE weather, the Patrols provide CAMBRIA CSD FIRE with additional “eyes & ears” for heightened awareness to accomplish the following objectives:
 - To report fires in their early stages.
 - To identify and report situations that may cause fires.
 - To be highly visible as to serve as a deterrent to arsonists.
- **Patrol Composition** - The Red Flag Fire Patrol (RFFP) is made up of members of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) who are radio equipped in mobile units assigned to designated areas in Cambria.
- **Patrol Areas** - CERT Staging Areas will be used as a guide in assigning patrol teams. The extent & severity of fire weather conditions determine which areas require patrols & the number of patrols.
- **Patrol Activation** - The decision to activate will be made by CAMBRIA CSD FIRE, based on weather and ground conditions. When a Patrol is determined to be necessary, CAMBRIA CSD FIRE will contact a CERT Coordinator to explain the situation, and advise when and where the patrols are needed. The CERT Coordinator will then contact one of the RFFP Group Supervisors to create and institute patrol teams.
- **Criteria**- Activation of the Red Flag Fire Patrols by CAMBRIA CSD FIRE is generally based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:
 - The National Weather Service announces a Red Flag Fire Advisory or Warning for the Cambria/North Coast area.
 - Ground or Fire weather conditions in any part of Cambria or its vicinity are such that the risk of fire is considered significant.
- **Duration of Patrols** - Patrols will operate during daylight hours, unless conditions require additional coverage approved by CAMBRIA CSD FIRE.
- **Patrol Identification**: Magnetic signs on the left and right side of patrol vehicles will identify each patrol team.
- **Personal Benefits** - As Volunteer State Employees, patrol participants are covered by CCSD Worker’s Compensation.

Cambria Fire/CERT Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

Patrol Instructions

- Patrols will commence and terminate at the discretion of the CAMBRIA CSD FIRE DEPARTMENT.
- Traffic laws will be obeyed at all times.
- Patrols will have their headlights turned on during patrols.
- Patrol members DO NOT have law enforcement authority, other than those of an ordinary citizen.
- Patrol members have no authority to enter fire closure areas or other restricted areas.
- Each patrol vehicle must have a minimum of two CERT members.
- Vehicles must be self-insured.
- Patrol members must wear their CERT ID at all times.
- Weapons are not allowed on patrol or in vehicle.
- Consumption and or usage of alcoholic beverages and or pain or other medications that can cause impairment are not permitted on patrol.
- Per California law, usage of cell phones or hand-held radios by the vehicle operator is not allowed under any circumstances, while the vehicle is in motion.
- Patrol assigned areas and stay on designated roadways.
- Patrol assigned areas as often as necessary or as otherwise instructed.
- Be alert for high points that provide an overall view of your patrol area and high-risk areas such as grass, brush and forested areas.
- Do not travel on Highway-1 with magnetic signs attached to vehicle, (wind will blow them off). Attach magnetic signs and turn on headlights upon arrival at patrol area. Remove signs and turn off headlights, if appropriate, when leaving area.
- Be alert to all vehicles and persons on your patrol routes. Log suspicious activities (ICS-214).
- Do not follow or tail any vehicle or person. Provide information.
- Do not leave assigned area without contacting RFFP Group Supervisor.
- Maintain ICS-214 Log and return it to the RFFP Group Supervisor or CAMBRIA CSD FIRE at end of patrol.
- Be aware of the locations of telephones for alternate communications.
- Familiarize yourselves with areas with communication challenges for both radio and cell phones. Insure you know locations where a better signal can be obtained or communications work more effectively.

Cambria Fire/CERT

Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

- Be familiar with roads, landmarks and other locations on the route in order to accurately report fire locations.
- Travelling on private property or closed areas is prohibited.
- Contact public to provide information and distribute fire safe information only.
- Report and log anything out of the ordinary.
- Note any abandoned vehicles on your patrol route noting the make, model, color, license plate and any distinctive description.
- Note and log any residents using powered equipment, such as tractors or mowers, the location, the type of activity and operator description. If the activity presents a real fire danger, the RFFP Supervisor shall be contacted. Make contact with resident or other person(s) only if safe to do so and provide information. Typically if person is made aware of the dangerous conditions that exist due to the weather, they will cease any unsafe act(s). If there is any resistance encountered, leave the scene and record and report the event

Cambria Fire/CERT

Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

Fire Emergency Reports

- Report fires immediately using 911 or the next most rapid means of communication available.
- Give accurate location (address, cross street, landmark, milepost marker, etc) type of fire (vegetation, vehicle, structure). In case of a vegetation fire, report size and if structures are threatened.
- If report is made by telephone, call 9-1-1 for emergencies only. (Non-emergency calls should be made to the RFFP Group Supervisor or Cambria CSD Fire at 927-6240.)

Fire Control

- Report fire.
- Due to safety requirements, assume no fire control responsibilities.
- It is important not to destroy any evidence at the fire scene.
- Log vehicles and persons in the area at the time. Get license numbers, note location of vehicles and people, description, direction of travel and time of observation
- Remain on location for emergency vehicle arrival, then leave the scene as soon as released and continue patrol of area for other fires.
- If, at the scene, your assistance is requested by a California Highway Patrol Officer or a Deputy Sheriff for traffic control, or other assistance, obey the command of the requesting officer. Notify the RFFP Supervisor.

Patrol Logs

- Fill out the Red Flag Fire Patrol Log sheet (ICS 214) completely, including signature of observer.
- The following information should be logged, noting time and location:
 - Vehicles parked on or off road in remote areas.
 - Same vehicle noted passing through an area several times.
 - People out of place walking along road or in brush.
 - Vehicle exiting a dirt road in remote area.
 - Observed smoke conditions.
 - Details of fire reports.

Cambria Fire/CERT Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

Patrol Logs - Continued

- If an activity appears to create a fire hazard. Log and report activity to the Cambria CSD Fire Department immediately.
- Log situations that are a hazard to the public, other than a fire.
- At the end of Patrols for each day, deliver completed log sheets to the RFFP Group Supervisor with a completed heading.
 - The RFFP Group Supervisor will deliver copies of completed logs to the CAMBRIA CSD FIRE DEPARTMENT
 - If fires have been occurring in the area, investigators will check Patrol Logs to determine and locate possible arson suspects or witnesses. Patrol observers may need to be contacted for additional information.

Public Relations - Citizen Contact

- If contacted by citizen inquiry, advise them that you are on Patrol, acting as "eyes and ears" for the Cambria CSD Fire Department. Refer them to the CAMBRIA CSD FIRE station for additional information.
- The general public may ask questions which non-CAMBRIA CSD FIRE personnel would be unable to answer. Any misinformation given out to the general public could be an embarrassment to CAMBRIA CSD FIRE, the Program and the individual giving the information.
- If contacted by the news media, report it to the RFFP Supervisor so they can notify a CAMBRIA CSD FIRE official. Under no circumstance should a Patrol member make any comment to the media. Instruct the media to contact Cambria CSD Fire for any official comments or statements.
- In case of an upset or irate citizen, contact the RFFP Supervisor immediately. Under no circumstances engage in verbal or physical action.
- Do not discuss laws, policies, procedures, fire occurrence and causes, or any, confidential matters with the general public.

Cambria Fire/CERT

Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

Safety - Accident Reports

- The use of seat belts is mandatory.
- As a safety measure, patrols will do a radio check before leaving on the route, check in when starting route, then at least once an hour, or as directed.
- Vehicles should be in a good state of repair.
- Obey traffic laws.
- If you are involved in a vehicle accident:
 - Contact 911 and report immediately to the RFFP Group Supervisor.
 - Remain at scene until a Law Enforcement arrives.
 - Get name and insurance information from the other driver.
 - Note make, model, vehicle registration number, and all other information that should be exchanged at the scene of an accident.
 - Remember, your vehicle insurance is in effect. There is no vehicle insurance coverage extended to RFFP members.

Patrol Training

- The Cambria CERT will coordinate training of new RFFP volunteers to identify and changes in policy or procedure.
- Patrol members will be trained in:
 - wildland fire awareness and safety
 - what to look for and what action(s) to take while on patrol.
 - what to do and what not to do, for given situations.
- New members may participate as observers until they receive formal training.

Patrol Equipment

- CERT ID
- CERT Car Placard (1ea per vehicle)
- CERT Cap (if available)
- “Red Flag Patrol” magnetic sign (2ea/vehicle)
- Activity Log Sheets (ICS 214)
- Area Map(s)
- Emergency Contact List
- Clipboard (1ea per vehicle)
- Radio(1ea per vehicle)
- Binoculars (1ea per vehicle)

Cambria Fire/CERT Red Flag *Fire* Patrol Program

- Optional CERT Member Equipment
 - Cell phone with camera
 - GPS

Deactivating Red Flag Patrol

- Cambria CSD Fire Department will notify a CERT Coordinator with instructions for when and where to deactivate the RFFP
- CERT Coordinator will notify RFFP Group Supervisor
- RFFP Group Supervisor will notify Patrol Teams on duty and scheduled for duty of deactivation.
- RFFP Equipment will be returned to the RFFP Group Supervisor and arrangements made to turned over to a CERT Coordinator.
- Completed (ICS-214) Activity Logs will be submitted to the RFFP Group Supervisor
- In the event of wind conditions where wind speeds approach 40 mph, RFFP activities should be discontinued for the safety of the members. If the RFFP is not discontinued RFFP teams should move to a location with visibility and away from trees and overhead hazards such as power and other utility lines.