

**SECTION V: PRE FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS**

**A: DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS**

**NEVADA-YUBA-PLACER UNIT (NEU)  
2010 IGNITION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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**FIRE PREVENTION**

NEU’s fire prevention program accomplishes Unit fire management goals through implementation of four primary components. These fire prevention components are information/education, engineering, law enforcement, and volunteerism. Information and education occurs through direct contact with the public, partnerships with local boards and councils, communication with professional organizations and employee involvement in the local community. Engineering occurs through local building department functions where Cal Fire personnel are assigned to assist in developing fire safe projects and planning. Law enforcement includes enforcement of California’s Forestry and Fire Laws in the industrial forestry arena to reduce fuel loading and prevent fires as well as the fire investigative arena once structure or wildland fires have occurred and the cause determination is necessary. Volunteerism occurs through support of the Volunteers in Prevention (VIP) program, which uses local volunteers to appear at public events, meet with residents, and correspond with the public with Cal Fire goals in mind. The balance of each of these components allows the prevention program to address statewide, regional and local fire issues.

NEU has found that the most effective method of spreading fire prevention information to educate the public is to make personal “one-on one” contact with the public. It is the Unit’s view that the single most effective method to protect personal and real property from wildland fires is for each individual landowner or resident to meet the mandates of Public Resources Code 4291 (defensible space standards). NEU encourages the public to extend hazardous fuel reduction beyond the PRC 4291 mandated defensible zone into the adjacent “Defensible Landscape” zone (area beyond the required 100’). This is the area where landowners can apply stewardship ethic, improve forest health and add to the protection of the property.

2010 Fire Season Ignition Statistics

<u>DPA</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
LRA fires	144	(30%)
SRA fires	288	(61%)
Unknown DPA	<u>45</u>	(9%)
Total 2010 NEU fires -	477	

2010 Summary by cause

<u>Cause</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Undetermined	92	(20%)
Equipment	93	(20%)
Vehicle	71	(15%)
Debris	74	(15%)
Arson	67	(14%)
Powerline*	<u>27</u>	(5%)
Total-	477	

\* Bird on powerline caused fires are increasing in number.

Largest 5 Fires in NEU 2010

Bullard - CANEU 00001579 (August 2010)

Cause: Arson

Acres: 1,307

Grand - CA NEU 00021786 (October 2010)

Cause: Unknown

Acres: 493

Baseline

Cause: Unknown

Acres: 441

Morrison - CANEU 00021791

Cause: Vehicle

Acres: 82

Twin Bridges – CANEU 00013161

Cause: Arson

Acres: 68

2010 Leading 5 Fire Causes

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1	Equipment *	48	20%
2	Vehicle	44	15%
3	Debris	27	15%
4	Arson	23	14%
5	Powerline	<u>23</u>	<u>6%</u>
Total-		165	70%

\* Equipment caused fires increased over the 3 year average by 5%.

### Ignition management

In order to better address ignition management for the Unit, a more detailed analysis of the fires in each major cause classification was conducted.

**1) Control Burning (debris burning)** - The number one cause of escaped control burns was lack of clearance followed by wind, and old control burns re-igniting (coming back to life). Unattended control burns also contributed to the totals.

**2) Vehicles** - This category has been one of the leading causes of fires in the Unit for the past several years. The majority of these fires occurred along the major traffic corridors of Interstate 80, hwy 49 and hwy 20. Brake fires, catalytic converter failure and other maintenance issues remains to be the leading cause of fires caused by vehicles. With the current economic conditions there appears to be less maintenance done on vehicles.

**3) Electrical power** - Most electrical fires resulted from trees, branches or birds into the power lines. Bird Causes are on the increase.

**4) Equipment** - Historically, this classification has been one of the top causes of wildfire starts in the Unit. Through continuing displays and education programs (handouts and the 4291 Program), we hope to continue a downward trend. The main cause of equipment fires continues to be mower fires. These fires were due to mower blades striking rocks and friction belts igniting chaff collected around the belt. Ironically, most of the mower caused fires occurred as a result of residents trying to clear their property for fire safety but they were clearing during the hottest part of the day, usually between the hours of 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.

**5) Miscellaneous causes** - This classification includes causes such as spontaneous combustion, fireplace ashes deposited in the wildland, barbequing, cooking fires, and fireworks.

**6) Playing with Fire** - Several juveniles were caught and went through either a Juvenile Fire Setter Class and others were sent to the Juvenile Justice System and sentenced to probation.

**7) Undetermined** - Continued hard work and dedication of the Unit's Fire Prevention Staff and the company officers who conduct thorough origin and cause investigations aid in the declining number in this cause class. Thorough origin and cause investigations also assist in determining fire patterns which may be reduced by public education and or enforcement.

**8) Arson** - The continued working relationships between all fire and law enforcement agencies is high priority for the Unit.

**9) Lightning** - Not much can be done to prevent or alter this category.

**10) Smoking** - The majority of these fires were carelessly discarded cigarettes along our roadways. However, several bark and planter box fires were directly attributed to smoking.

**11) Illegal campfires and campfire escapes** - Public education and campfire permit requirements help to keep the number of fires from the category low.

**12) Railroad** - The Unit has a major east/west rail line operated by Union Pacific railroad, yearly fire prevention meeting's along with work site inspection, work to reduce the fires started by the railroad.

2010 Unit Fire Causes

