Introduction:

Fuel modification has proven to be a major factor in reducing fire spread onto structures from wildfires. When combined with special building requirements set forth in CBC Chapter 7A, the ignition of structures is further reduced.

Purpose:

The intent of this document is to provide the minimum standards necessary to meet the requirements for fuel modification in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The requirements are per CFC Chapter 49, California Code of Regulations Title 14 and BHMC. The Fuel Modification Plan brings fire safe landscaping to improve public safety and reduce property loss during wildfire emergencies.

Scope:

New construction or 2,500 sq. ft. of relandscaping subject to the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) California Code of Regulations Title 23 and located in the VHFHSZ shall submit Fuel Modification Landscape Plans for review and approval by the Fire Code Official.

Requirements:

Fuel Modification Submittal. Fuel modification plans shall be submitted to the Fire Code Official for review and approval. Plans shall include the vegetation that will be planted on-site and verify prohibited vegetation is not placed.

Fuel Modification Content: A fuel modification plan shall include the following information:

1. A copy of site plan
2. Location and list of newly planted vegetation
3. Confirmation that no prohibited vegetation will be placed.
**Prohibited Vegetation:**

Certain plants are considered to be undesirable and invasive due to their characteristics. These characteristics can be either physical or chemical. Physical properties that would contribute to high flammability include large amounts of dead material retained within the plant, rough or peeling bark, and the production of copious amount of debris. Chemical properties include the presence of volatile substances such as oils, resins, wax and pitch. The following vegetation shall not be planted in new or modified landscaping located in the VHFSZ:

- **Trees:** Pine, Eucalyptus, Acacia, Cypress, Cedar, Palm & Fir
- **Shrubs:** Juniper, California Sage Brush, Coyote Brush, Brooms, Hopseed Bush, Chamise
- **Groundcovers:** Algerian Ivy
- **Perennials:** Bamboo, Pampas grass, Deer Grass, Fountain Grass, Black Sage

Exception: Existing trees, shrubs or grass shall be maintained in accordance to VHFHSZ maintenance requirements BHMC 4906.3.1

Replanting existing vegetation that becomes dead or diseased shall be replaced with an alternate tree, shrub, or grass that is not prohibited.

**Additional Requirements:**

Organic mulch, woodchips or similar combustible products shall not be placed within 15 feet of any structure or within 5 feet of any combustible perimeter fence.

Inorganic mulch such as rock, gravel, or similar noncombustible mulch is highly recommended.

Prior to Certificate of Occupancy or final approval of a permit, a landscape architect or qualified individual must certify the installation in accordance with this code and approved plans.

**Maintenance:**

The property owner shall retain all approved fuel modification plans. The plans shall be used to perform maintenance.

Maintenance of vegetation on private property shall be ongoing and the responsibility of property owner per BHMC 4906.3.1