

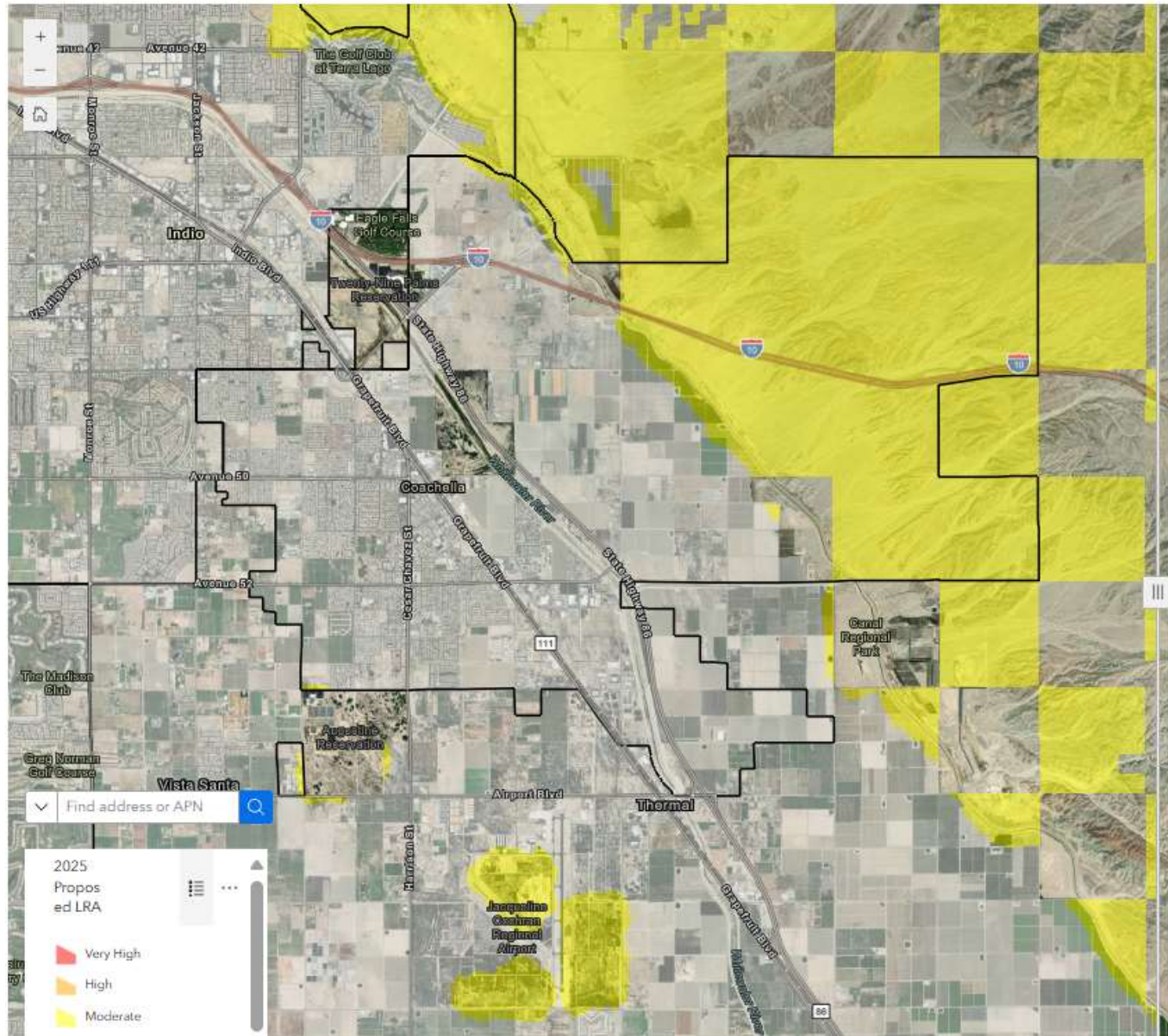
# Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) & Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) Updates



The recent updates to Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in California provide a more precise assessment of wildfire risks using modern climate data and advanced fire modeling. These updates impact Local Responsibility Areas (LRA), influencing fire prevention measures. Including defensible space, building codes, and real estate disclosure requirements.

### **Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) – 2025 FHSZ Updates**

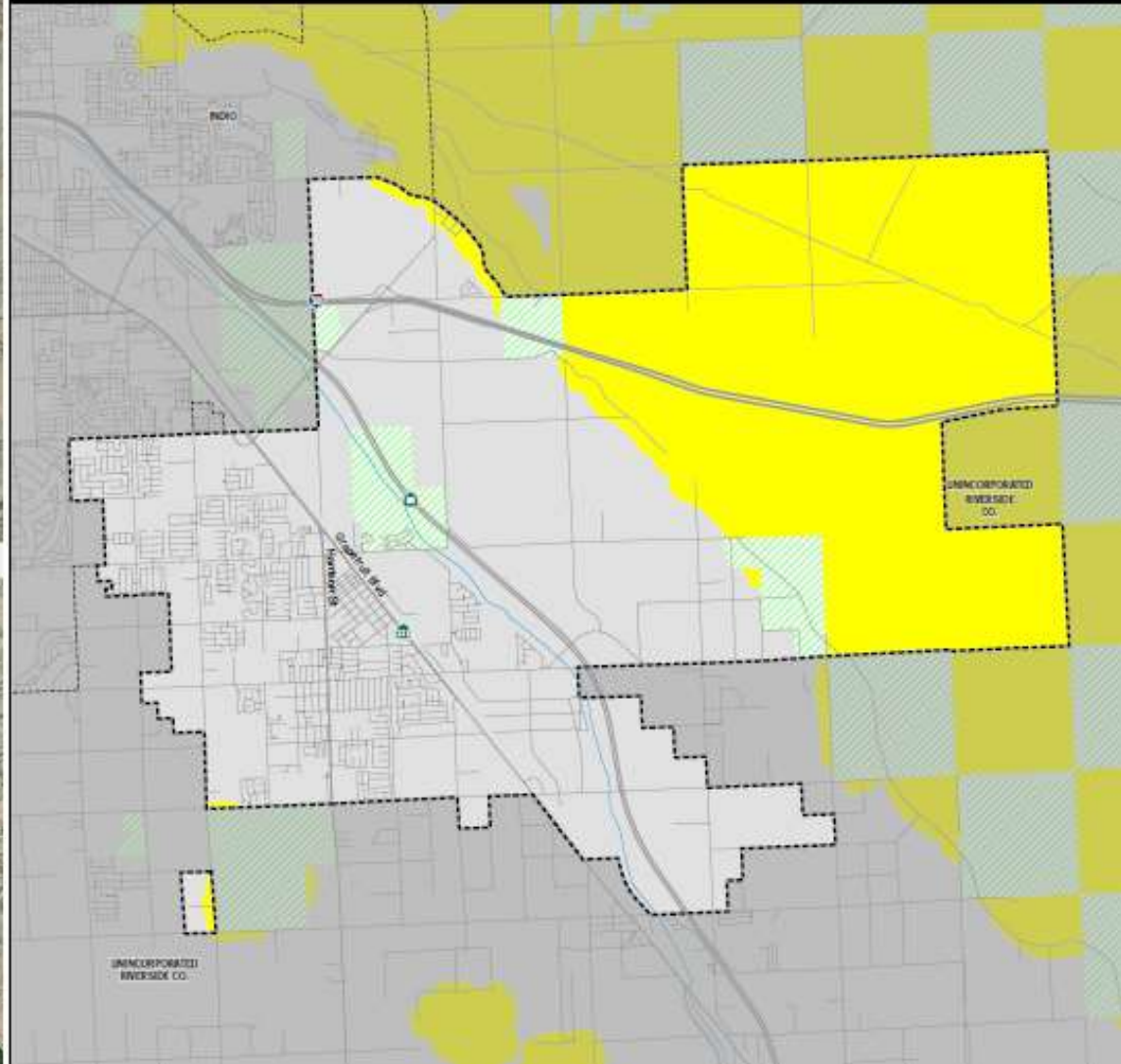
On March 24, 2025, OSFM issued the 2025 Recommended Local Responsibility Area (LRA) FHSZ maps for Riverside County.



# Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones

As Identified by the  
State Fire Marshal

March 24, 2025



## **LRA 2025 FHSZ Map Changes**

According to Government Code Section 51179 (b)(3):

- Local agencies **shall not** decrease the FHSZ level recommended by OSFM.
- Local agencies **may** add to or increase the recommended FHSZ level, but **Riverside County Fire Department is not proposing any additions or increases** during this adoption process.

## **2025 LRA FHSZ Adoption**

Per state law, Riverside County Fire Department and the local jurisdictions must make the maps available for public viewing within 30 days of receipt. Additionally, county/city must adopt the OSFM-recommended LRA FHSZ maps, by ordinance, within 120 days of their release.

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### FHSZ Classification

Properties are designated as **Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones** based on:

- Terrain and topography
- Vegetation and fuel conditions
- Fire history and frequency
- Climate and weather patterns
- Ember Cast modeling

### Fire Hazard vs. Fire Risk

FHSZ maps identify the **hazard potential**, not the immediate risk. They do not factor in mitigation efforts such as defensible space, fire-resistant construction, or local firefighting capabilities.

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## FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES WITHIN LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

### VERY HIGH

Adopt FHSZ | CEQA | Subdivision Map Act | Safety Element | Fire Safe Regulations  
Chapter 7A | Defensible Space | Hazard Disclosure | Subdivision Review

### HIGH

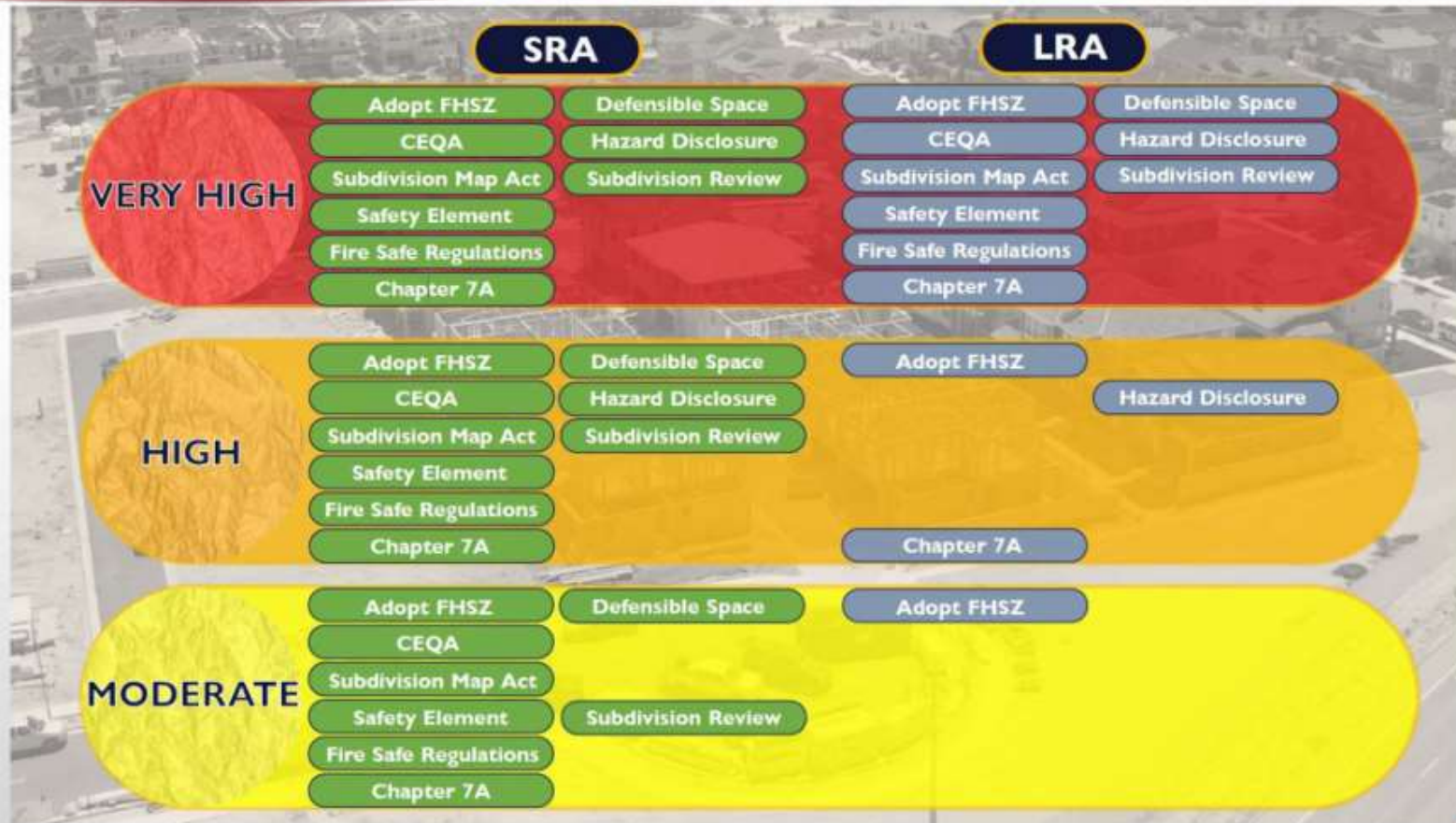
Adopt FHSZ | Chapter 7A | Hazard Disclosure

### MODERATE

Adopt FHSZ

## Impact on Property Owners

# Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ)



### Homeowners in Very High FHSZ must:

- Maintain **100 feet of defensible space** around structures.
- Comply with **home hardening** requirements to reduce ignition risks.
- Ensure new construction and renovations adhere to **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) building codes**.
- Disclose **FHSZ designation** when selling property.

### Homeowners in High FHSZ must:

- Comply with **home hardening** requirements to reduce ignition risks.
- Ensure new construction and renovations adhere to **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) building codes**.
- Disclose **FHSZ designation** when selling



# What are the WUI and the WUI Code?

The WUI, or Wildland-Urban Interface, is the area where human development and wildland vegetation meet or intermingle, increasing the risk of wildfires and their impact on communities and homes.

Houses in the WUI are located close to wildland vegetation that can fuel fires, increasing the risk to these homes when wildfires occur.

What does the WUI Code do?

- Establishes regulations to safeguard life and property from the intrusion of wildland fire and to prevent structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels.
- Regulates defensible space and provides ignition-resistant construction requirements to protect against fire exposure and resist ignition by burning ember cast.
- Provides standards for emergency access, water supply and fire protection.
- Provides requirements for automatic fire suppression and safe storage practices.

# Steps to Reduce Wildfire Susceptibility

## Defensible Space

- Maintain a 30 “Lean, Clean, and Green” zone.
  - Remove and reduce all dead and dry foliage within 30’ of your home.
  - Keep roofs and gutters clear of debris
  - Trim branches encroaching on your home
  - Consider native plants or xeriscape
- 100’ zone
  - Thin and space vegetation
  - Create fuel breaks
  - Incorporate hardscape
- \*Zone zero\*

## Home Hardening

- Create defensible space by clearing and reducing vegetation
- Maintaining vegetation so it does not become dry or dead.
- Opt for fire resistant construction materials such as tile roofs, noncombustible siding and gutters, and noncombustible decking.
- Seal entry points under eaves by boxing
- Install proper vent mesh to prevent embers from entering attics
- Cover chimney and stovepipe openings with the proper mesh to prevent embers

Contact [MySafeRiverside.org](https://www.MySafeRiverside.org), for information on how to form FireWise communities.

**Question: What is “LRA” ?**

Answer: Local Responsibility Areas are areas where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection.

**Question: When will the maps go into effect?**

Answer: The maps must be adopted, by ordinance, within 120 days of their release.

**Question: Will existing homes/buildings be subject to upgrades or mitigations if their Hazard Severity Zone is now more restrictive?**

Answer: Some remodels, additions or improvements may be subject to upgraded construction. State law will require all homes in Very High to create defensible space and manage vegetation. And if you're selling a home you will need to disclose whether it is in a fire hazard zone.

**Question: What zone is enforced where a property falls into two or more zones?**

Answer: We have taken the position that the requirements of most restrictive zone will apply based on dialogue with the state and the fact that the real estate disclosures will always reference the highest zone.

**Question: Can Cities and Counties decide not to adopt the new LRA maps?**

Answer: Cities and Counties are required to adopt the maps, as mandated by AB211. Cities and Counties may make maps more restrictive, but not less restrictive, per GC51179.

# Legislation

📄 **Senate Bill 63 (2021)** – Expanded fire hazard oversight to include **Moderate** and **High** zones in addition to **Very High** FHSZ classifications.

📄 **Assembly Bill 337 (1992)** – Originally mandated the identification of **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones** following destructive wildfires.

📄 **Assembly Bill 211 (2022)** – Requires local agencies to **adopt Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZ designations** within **120 days** of OSFM recommendations. Local governments **cannot** downgrade state-designated hazard levels but may increase them if justified.

Additional information and links to resources can be found at:

[www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) – Our department > Administrative Support > Office of the County Fire Marshal > Fire Hazard Severity Zone