

CAL FIRE Butte Unit
Policies and Procedures



Approved By: 

Darren Read, Unit Chief

Approval Date: **September 1, 2017**

Subject: **8100 Command and Control**
Specific Subject: **8121.001 Checking a Fire**

Original Policy Date: **June 2017**
Revision Date: **N/A**

POLICY:

The Butte Unit will ensure that there are no escaped fires after an incident has been declared controlled, and will ensure that fires declared contained are checked a minimum of three times prior to declaring the fire controlled.

PROCEDURE:

Incident Status reflects whether the incident is:

- Uncontrolled – The status of a fire which threatens to destroy life, property, or natural resources, and (a) is not burning within the confines of firebreaks, or (b) forward progress has been stopped, but is burning with such intensity that it could not be readily extinguished with ordinary tools commonly available.
- Contained – The completion of a control line around a fire or any associated spot fires that can reasonably be expected to stop the spread of a fire.
 - Fires contained prior to 2 hours will not have access to the Emergency Fund
- Controlled – The completion of control line around a fire, any spot fires and any interior islands to be saved; burned out any unburned area adjacent to the fire side of the control lines; and cool down all hot spots that are immediate threats to the control line, until the lines can reasonably be expected to hold under the foreseeable conditions.

The Incident Commander (IC) shall notify the local Command Center each time the incident status changes. This notification shall be a minimum of at least once every twelve hours. The Unit Command Center shall be responsible for documenting in the dispatch system of record each time the incident status changes.

Prior to an incident being declared contained, the Incident Commander will ensure:

- A completed fire line to bare mineral soil 1 ½ time the height of the fuel or a minimum of 18" has been completed around the entire fire and any associated spot fires.

Prior to an incident being declared controlled, the Incident Commander will ensure:

- Fires in brush and timber fuel models will be checked a minimum of three times with no smokes prior to the fire being declared controlled to ensure all hot material has been extinguished. It will be the responsibility of the company officer assigned the report to ensure that the fire is void of smokes. Fires in strictly grass fuel models will be checked at the discretion of the covering BC.
 - The fire company performing the check will walk the fire line to ensure that it is intact, and grid the interior to ensure that there are no smokes within the burn.
 - Fires should be checked prior to the heat of the day, or earlier if fire weather conditions dictate.

- If the company officer with responsibility to check the fire goes off duty, the company officer coming on duty to relieve them will have the responsibility to check the fire. Pass down the responsibility in the fire stations shift notes.
- If there is hot material present after three checks, the fire will remain in "patrol" status until all indications of heat have subsided. When the fire is controlled, and the ECC will close the incident.
- If it is determined that fires are so large that interior smokes will pose little threat to spotting over the line, the covering Battalion Chief can establish criteria for checking a fire. For example, firefighters will extinguish all smokes within 300' of the control line.
- Structure fires will be completely controlled prior to leaving the scene. Engines may check a structure fire without notification to the ECC.