



Kensington Community Services District

DATE: May 14, 2026

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: David Aranda, Interim General Manager (IGM)

SUBJECT: Approve the County Moving Forward with the Red Flag No Parking Restrictions Resolution Giving Authority to the KCSD For No Parking Restrictions for Certain Streets on Red Flag Days

RECOMMENDATION:

Board approval supporting the red flag no parking restrictions, enforced by the Kensington Police Department, and supporting the Resolution that will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors giving such authority to KCSD.

BACKGROUND:

Over the years there has been much discussion and some action (not legal) in attempting to restrict parking on certain streets. The desire to restrict parking stems from two critical issues. First, the ability for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles to access roads in Kensington as those vehicles respond to an emergency. Second, the distinct possibility of residents heading in the opposite direction evacuating a site in Kensington.

A Zoom meeting held a few weeks ago that included Supervisor Gioia, Fire Chief Saylor, Police Chief Gancasz and personnel from the Contra Costa Public Works Department yielded a legal and practical procedure to restrict parking on certain designated streets in Kensington when the National Weather Service declares a red flag day in Kensington.

The Board of Supervisors would approve a resolution (draft will be provided prior to the meeting) granting designated streets to be declared as no parking streets on red flag days. The streets were designated by the Kensington Fire Chief. The resolution would give authority to the Police Chief to enforce the no parking restrictions.

Attached is a draft outline from the Police Chief that describes the process involved as a red flag day is predicated to be forecasted for Kensington. Please also find attached the letter from the fire chief and from the IGM that was hand delivered to all residents in Purdue, Kenyon, and Westminster.

EXHIBIT(S):

- KCSD Police Department Proposed Red Flag Procedures
- Fire Chief Memo on Red Flag Day 2026_0428
- Red Flag Letter to Residents_2026_0428
- Mary Selkirk Letter 04.30.2026



Red Flag Event Parking Restriction Program

Public Notification, Staffing, and Enforcement Framework

Kensington Community Services District – Police Department

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to enhance public safety during periods of extreme fire danger by ensuring roadway access for emergency responders, reducing traffic congestion, and supporting evacuation readiness.

This document outlines the Police Department's procedures for staffing, public notification, and enforcement during Red Flag Warning events issued by the National Weather Service.

2 RED FLAG EVENT DEFINITION

A Red Flag Event is declared when the National Weather Service identifies critical fire weather conditions, typically including:

- High temperatures
- Low humidity
- Strong winds

These conditions significantly increase wildfire risk and require heightened readiness from public safety agencies.

3 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Upon issuance of a Red Flag Warning affecting the District, the following actions will occur:

4 1. ADVANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS (PRE-SEASON AND PRE-ORDINANCE)

- Written notices will be distributed to residents on streets designated for potential parking restrictions.
- Notices will be delivered directly to residences to ensure awareness of the ordinance and its requirements.

5 2. PRE-EVENT NOTIFICATION (BEFORE RED FLAG ACTIVATION)

Before the start of a Red Flag Event, the District will issue targeted notifications advising residents to remove vehicles from restricted streets.

Notification methods may include:

- Nixle emergency alert system
- District website alerts and banner notifications
- Official social media channels
- Email distribution lists
- In-person outreach (staffing and volunteer availability dependent)

The goal is early voluntary compliance before enforcement begins.

6 3. RED FLAG EVENT ACTIVATION (DURING EVENT)

Final Field Notifications:

- Officers, volunteers, or authorized personnel may provide last-contact warnings to vehicle owners when feasible.

Public Messaging Continues:

- Ongoing updates may be issued through available communication platforms.
- Messaging will emphasize urgency, safety, and compliance.

7 4. END-OF-EVENT NOTIFICATION

When the Red Flag Warning expires:

- The District will notify the public that parking restrictions are lifted.
- Notifications will be disseminated through the same communication platforms used during activation.

8 POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING DURING RED FLAG EVENTS

- Additional officer shifts may be deployed during peak risk periods
- Overtime staffing is authorized
- Supervisors assess conditions and determine deployment levels
- Officers are assigned to:
 - High-visibility patrols
 - Traffic flow and choke point management

- Emergency access route monitoring
- Support to fire and allied agencies

9 ENFORCEMENT APPROACH

Primary Objective: Voluntary Compliance

- Residents are given multiple opportunities to comply through advance and real-time notifications.

Enforcement Actions (When Necessary):

1. Warnings (when feasible)
2. Citations
3. Vehicle Removal (Towing)

Enforcement actions will be taken when:

- Vehicles obstruct emergency access routes
- Traffic congestion creates safety hazards
- Compliance is not achieved after notification

10 OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

- Maintain clear roadways for emergency vehicles
- Reduce traffic bottlenecks in high-risk areas
- Improve evacuation readiness
- Enhance overall community safety during wildfire conditions

11 CONCLUSION

The Red Flag Event Parking Restriction Program reflects a coordinated effort between public safety operations and community cooperation. The Police Department's approach emphasizes:

- Early and repeated notification
- Visible staffing and readiness
- Fair and progressive enforcement

Adoption of this ordinance will provide a critical tool to protect life, property, and access during periods of extreme fire danger.



EL CERRITO-KENSINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



10900 San Pablo Avenue ▪ El Cerrito ▪ CA ▪ 94530
 (510) 215-4450 ▪ FAX (510) 232-4917
www.el-cerrito.org

DATE: April 28, 2026
TO: Residents of Westminster Ave., Kenyon Ave., and Purdue Ave.
FROM: Eric Saylor, Fire Chief
RE: Red Flag Parking

Why Restricted Parking on Red Flag Days in Kensington Is Critical to Public Safety

In Kensington, restricted parking on Red Flag Days is not a minor traffic inconvenience; it is a core public-safety measure. A Red Flag Warning means critical fire weather is occurring or imminent; strong winds, low humidity, and warm temperatures that can drive extreme fire behavior and allow new fires to spread quickly. The fire department treats these days seriously and it adds additional units and staffing at Station 55 when available. When conditions make minutes matter, keeping streets clear is one of the few immediate protections the community can control.

This matters even more because Kensington's street network is unusually constrained. The local roads serve both as emergency access and as evacuation routes; however, many of them are narrow and steep. To reiterate this point, The Kensington Evacuation Research Project recommended removing some on-street parking or restricting parking on red flag days, especially on suggested evacuation routes, roads that need two-lane functionality, and tight or critical intersections where turning radii and staging space are essential for first responders. Local fire-access standards are also built around a minimum unobstructed width of 20 feet for fire apparatus roadways. In a hillside community with many pinch points, parked cars can turn a marginally passable street into a choke point for engines and residents at the worst possible time.

The evacuation side of the problem is equally clear. On Red Flag Days, residents should park off-street and back vehicles into driveways or garages, specifically to leave streets clear for emergency vehicles. Any delay in evacuations due to street parking contributes to traffic jams and puts neighbors and first responders at risk. Every minute counts during evacuations. In the 2022 Kensington evacuation drill residents reported that parking-orientation changes were needed. Traffic can quickly concentrate onto a few routes, and even a handful of curbside vehicles at bends, intersections, or narrow segments can delay both evacuation and response.

Restricted parking is also essential for fire department access to critical control points in Kensington. Fire equipment, police vehicles, and/or community officials need priority access into Kensington on Red Flag days. Removing parking near tight or critical intersections will improve turning radii and create staging areas for first responders. The clear streets in critical areas allow resources to quickly extinguish wildland fires when they are much smaller. The purpose of the Red Flag program is to improve emergency access, reduce street congestion, and enhance evacuation routes. In practical terms, parking restrictions help ensure that access to Arlington,

Red Flag Parking Letter

April 28, 2026

Residence of Westminster Ave, Kenyon Ave, Purdue Ave.

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Sunset, cemetery entry points, and other narrow hillside streets remains as unrestricted and rapid as possible when responders need to get in immediately.

For all of these reasons, restricted parking on Red Flag Days in Kensington is a sensible and necessary life-safety policy. It is not just about cleaner streets or easier driving; it is about preserving evacuation capacity, maintaining turning room at critical intersections, and allowing fire personnel to reach threatened areas without delay. Kensington's own fire-preparedness guidance, evacuation research, and evacuation drill findings all point in the same direction: on the highest fire-danger days, keeping streets clear can save time, and in a fast-moving wildfire, saved time saves lives.



April 28, 2026

Dear Resident:

We are delivering this important message from the Fire Chief because the street you live on will be impacted with no parking regulation when the National Weather Service declares a red flag day in Kensington. It would be very much appreciated if you would do the following:

1. Read over the Fire Chiefs letter that is attached.
2. Contact me should you have any questions or concerns. daranda@kppcsd.org is my email address.
3. Plan to attend the board meeting on May 14, 2026. This agenda item should be addressed at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Last year there were no Red Flag days declared for Kensington and in the past years it occurs typically two times per year. We do understand that when a red flag day is declared in Kensington it will be an inconvenience for you, but we are hopeful that you understand the importance of leaving Westminster Ave, Kenyon Ave. and Purdue Ave., open for emergency vehicles responding to an emergency as vehicles evacuating may be going the other direction.

Protocols will be developed and communicated to residents impacted by red flags and no parking regulations soon.

Thank you for helping make Kensington a safer place for all residents.

Sincerely,

David Aranda

David Aranda
Interim General Manager

April 30, 2026

Board of Directors
Kensington Community Services District
%David Arenda, Interim General Manager
10940 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dear KCSD Board members,

I just learned that the KCSD Board is considering a Red Flag “No Parking” Program, to be enforced on days of high fire risks. I strongly support this program. It is essential that certain streets at the top of the ridge be free of cars to enable easier evacuation for those who live on or near the ridge.

I would also respectfully request that the Board consider adding Beloit Avenue below Grizzly Peak to the list streets for the proposed fire risk parking restrictions. On any ordinary day driving up and down Beloit is a hazard because of parked cars on one side and deep drainage gullies on the other. Evacuation down Beloit during a fire emergency could be even more hazardous.

I urge to Board to approve this proposal.

Sincerely,

Mary Selkirk
255 Grizzly Peak Blvd
Kensington, CA 94708
510-967-6183