



Kensington Community Services District

BOARD APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RED FLAG DAYS IN KENSINGTON

Introduction: The community of Kensington, California is susceptible to wildfires. The wildlands east of Kensington and the hilly, narrow streets, while quaint and beautiful, can be extremely dangerous with the right conditions.

Areas east of Highgate Rd. and Arlington Ave. have been designated moderate, high, and extremely high [Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#) by the California State Fire Marshal. In the event of a wildfire, fierce winds can carry embers for miles. Due to its location on a Wildland-Urban Interface, all of Kensington is potentially at risk in the event of a wildfire.

This document, approved by the Kensington Community Services District (KCSD) Board of Directors and created with input from the Kensington Police Chief and the El Cerrito/Kensington Fire Chief along with the Board's Emergency Preparedness Committee, is intended to assist in providing guidance when the National Weather Service declares a Red Flag Day in Kensington.

Historically, Red Flag Days are rarely proclaimed for Kensington due to the fog and moisture typically generated by its proximity to the ocean.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING RED FLAG DAYS IN KENSINGTON, CA

Q: What is a Red Flag Day?

A: It is a Fire Weather Watch and a Red Flag Warning when dry fuels, plus dangerous weather like high winds, extremely low humidity, dry thunderstorms, lightning, or dry frontal passage increase the chances for a severe fire to occur.

The National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office issues them 18-96 hours in advance.

They are declared to give fire agencies time to staff up, reposition resources, and prepare for potential rapid-fire growth. This notice can be of benefit to all residents, businesses, and other operations involving group activities.

Q: What is a PDS?

A: PDS stands for Particularly Dangerous Situation. The National Weather Service will place this wording inside a Red Flag Warning to highlight an exceptional and especially dangerous possible fire-weather event for the benefit of first responders and the community.

Q: What is recommended for schools, churches, organizations hosting youth activities, sports, and or public gatherings when a Red Flag Day is forecasted?

A: All organizations should have a person designated to monitor weather forecasts and who understands the degrees of severity of Red Flag Days. Based on the severity of the weather forecast, the person in charge of said organization may decide to remain closed for the day or to close early. Other less drastic measures may include prohibiting smoking, open flames, and any ignition source. Additional prudent measures which can become crucial during an emergency include maintaining proper staffing levels, training staff in evacuation readiness, and ensuring all emergency exits, alarms, and PA systems are functional.

For PDS (Particular Dangerous Situation) declarations with sustained winds exceeding forty-five miles per hour it is recommended that public buildings close and activities be cancelled/suspended.

Q: How will Kensington Fire Department, Kensington Police Department and Kensington Community Services District respond to the National Weather Service calling a Red Flag Day in Kensington?

A: The Kensington Fire Department, in conjunction with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), will staff accordingly based on the risk profile.

The Kensington Police Department will increase its patrol staff from the usual two officers to three.

Q: Why are parking restrictions recommended on certain streets when the NWS calls a Red Flag Day for Kensington?

A: Parking restrictions are necessary for certain streets in the event of a Red Flag Day in Kensington to support access for first responders in case of a fire emergency. In the event of an evacuation, emergency vehicles would typically be going in the opposite direction of residents leaving the area. Parking restrictions ensure these streets are clear for emergency vehicle access and potentially for evacuation as well.

Q: How will parking restrictions be communicated and enforced?

A: The Board of Supervisors is delegating control of the streets in Kensington for red flag parking restrictions. The fire chief will note streets for red flag no parking; the police chief will oversee the enforcement of those streets on declared red flag days. Please see the attached document that outlines how the police department with their volunteers will notify residents prior to a declared red flag day and during a declared red flag day. As noted in the memo from the police chief, limitations on notifications in person may be limited so all residents are encouraged to sign up for the Nixle app.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY PRIOR TO AN EMERGENCY NOTE THE FOLLOWING LINKS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS YOU SHOULD BE SUBSCRIBING TO:

- <https://www.kensingtonfire.org/redflag>
- [Residents-Contra-Costa--County-Wildfire-Guide](#)