



Sonoma County Vegetation Management Program Update

Sonoma County Code Ordinance 13A,
Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation and
Combustible Material

Topics

- 2019 Statistics
- 2020 program: Goals and timelines
- New Data collection platforms
- Training
- Ordinance Modifications
- Community Outreach
- Notification
- Enforcement and Abatement

Stats...The Short Story

2019 Inspections Completed

District Inspections Improved Properties	First Inspections Completed	2,001
	Second Inspections Completed	243
	Total	2,244
District Inspections Unimproved Properties	First Inspections Completed	738
	Second Inspections Completed	11
	Total	749
CAL FIRE, Improved	CAL FIRE Defensible Space Inspections	3,851
	TOTAL Inspections	6,844

2019 Inspection Program

District Inspections Improved Properties	How many we proposed to do	2,896
	How many were completed, First & Second Inspections	2,244
	Percent	77%
District Inspections Unimproved Properties	How many we proposed to do	1,043
	How many were completed, First & Second Inspections	749
	Percent	72%

2019 Inspection Compliance

District Inspections Improved Properties	Percent Compliant after First Inspection	50%
	Percent Compliant after Second Inspection	72%
District Inspections Unimproved Properties	Percent Compliant after First Inspection	53%
	Percent Compliant after Second Inspection	91%

A few more

How many we proposed to do, Improved	2,896
How many were completed, Improved	2,001
Percent	69.10%
How many we proposed to do, Unimproved	1,043
How many were completed, Unimproved	738
Percent	70.76%
Percentage Compliant, Improved	50.17%
Percentage Compliant, Unimproved	53.12%

Goal for 2020

- 2,500 - 3,000 Defensible Space Inspection Program Inspections
 - County of Sonoma Prevention Division and
 - District Partners
- Inspection area focus will be in the Unincorporated LRA
- CAL FIRE will continue to inspect in the SRA

- COMPLAINTS: Follow-up expected within 5 days of complaint

Timeline:

January - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• App Creation• Ordinance Revision• Parcel Selection & Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training Development• Notification materials• Community Outreach materials
March - April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training• App Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mail notifications• PR Campaign
May – June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Meetings• Begin First Inspections	
July - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspections First & Second• NOVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abatement procedures
September - October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abatement proceedings• Last inspections	
November - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data Round up	

Next Year's Inspection Platform...

Lessons Learned

- More precise inspection parcel selection
- Collector App / Accela Data platform
 - Better workflow will provide improved data tracking & progress reports
 - Less data entry in the field (more pre-filled fields), and better data entry rules (if-then) to reduce errors
 - Automated printing, mailing & tracking of Notices of Violation/Abatement
 - Automated reinspect date field and calendar interface
- Apps in active development:
 - Accela is Plan A.
 - Concurrently developing improved Collector App program as Plan B.
- We will be field testing and seeking input from Fire District staff.

Training

- Need for field inspectors to have adequate training—Improved “train the trainer” materials will be available
- Based on community concern, adding more basic environmental information to training unit. Training materials will be developed in conjunction with UC Cooperative Extension, Sonoma Environmental Center, etc.
- Will be adding in-the-field training components, most likely regional.

Ordinance 13A

- Proposed Revisions
 - Remove 5 acre restriction
 - Clarification and reordering of requirements
 - Add reserved section for 3 foot non combustibile zone
- Currently at County Council for review
 - Will distribute soon

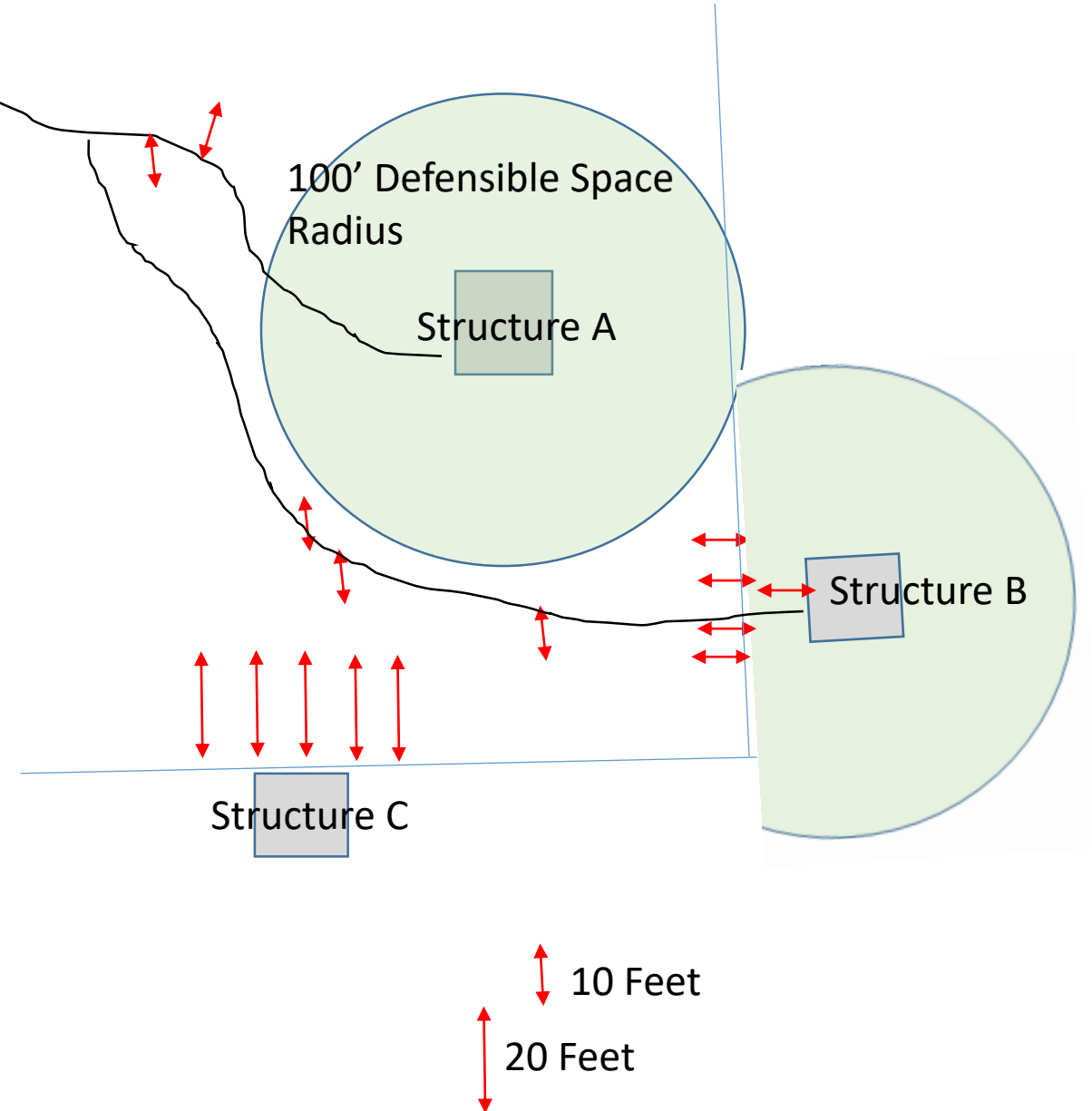
Ordinance 13A—Very Basic Overview

a) For Improved Properties

- (1) Reserved for 3-5 foot non-combustible**
- (2) Vegetation Management Requirements within a thirty-feet** (or to the property line) defensible space radius around all structures. Dead and dying, low branches, wood piles, etc.
- (3) Maintain a “Reduced Fuel Zone” from thirty to one hundred feet**
- (4) Other Requirements: Regulations applying from 0-100 feet, and other requirements**

(b) For unimproved parcels and/or portions of improved parcels which fall outside of the requirements of Sec. 13A-4(a), and where vegetation exists within 20 feet from neighboring structures and/or within 10 feet from private roads.

- (1) **Within 20 feet of neighboring structures:** Grasses, low branches, dead and dying
- (2) **Private Roads and Driveways,** 14' vertical, 10' horizontal
- (3) **Combustible material** shall be removed from the property when identified by the fire official.



Community Outreach

- We will use social media and traditional media to notify residents of upcoming inspections
- We hope to partner with Fire Districts to deliver Community Meetings to address resident questions

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO KEEP YOUR PROPERTY IN COMPLIANCE YEAR ROUND

SONOMA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT INSPECTIONS HELP TO ENSURE YOU ARE IN COMPLIANCE, BUT IT IS UP TO OWNERS TO UNDERSTAND AND IMPLEMENT THESE FIRESAFE PRACTICES

Your home and property may be your most important investment. Protect your investment and help give firefighters a fighting chance by keeping a good defensible space around your home.

ZONE 1: 0-30 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, DECKS, ETC.

The "Defensible Space Zone." Keep it lean, clean, and green to insure that wind-blown embers don't ignite materials near your home, exposing it to flames.

- Remove all branches within 10 feet of any stovepipe or chimney outlet. PRC§4291 (A)(4) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(4)
- Remove leaves, needles or other vegetation on roofs, gutters, decks, porches, stairways, etc. PRC§4291 (A)(6) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(6)
- Remove all dead or dying trees, branches, shrubs or other plants adjacent to or overhanging buildings. PRC§4291 (A)(8) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(8)
- Prune lower branches of trees to a height of 6 to 15 feet or 1/3 tree height for trees under 18 feet. PRC§4291 (A)(1) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(9)
- Remove all dead or dying grass, leaves, needles or other vegetation. PRC§4291 (A)(1) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(10)
- Remove or separate live flammable ground cover and shrubs. PRC§4291 (A)(1) ; SCFC 13A-4(A)(1)
- Climbing vines must be removed from trees and structures. SCFC 13A-4(A)(1)
- Spark arrestors are required on all chimneys and stovepipes, and must have metal screen openings between 3/8 inch and 1/2 inch. CBC 213.9.14, SCFC 13A-4(A)(7)
- Don't allow flammable mulches or tree duff to pile up against house siding. Maintain at least 6 inches of clearance, preferable more. Recommended
- Store firewood & wood piles at least 20 feet from structures, and clear 10 feet around and 15 feet above combustible piles. Never store flammable materials under decks or against house walls. Recommended
- Remove combustible debris, such as trash, cardboard, or wood near buildings. CFC§304.1.13

ZONE 2: 30-100 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, DECKS, ETC.

The "Reduced Fuel Zone." Reducing fuels in Zone 2 will help reduce the energy and spread of an oncoming wildfire, thus creating a landscape that will not readily transmit fire to the home.

- Mow dead or dying grass to a maximum of 4 inches in height. Trimmings may remain on the ground. PRC§4291 (A)(1)
- Live flammable ground cover less than 18 inches in height may remain, but overhanging and adjacent trees must be pruned to a height of 6 to 15 feet. PRC§4291 (A)(1)
- Large trees do not have to be cut and removed as long as all of the plants beneath them are maintained to provide the appropriate spacing, see Vertical Spacing diagram PRC§4291 (A)(1)

UNIMPROVED PARCELS:

SCFC 13A-4(b) applies to unimproved parcels of 5 acres or less in unincorporated areas:

- Flammable vegetation and other combustible growth within 10 feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage shall be removed. SCFC 13A-4(b)(1)
- Dead and dying vegetation within 10 feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage shall be removed. SCFC 13A-4(b)(2)
- Grass and combustible surface vegetation within ten feet 10' of neighboring structures and roadway frontage must be trimmed to less than four inches 4" in height unless necessary for erosion control. SCFC 13A-4(b)(3)
- All trees within ten feet 10' of neighboring structures and roadway frontage must be pruned to at least six feet 6' above grade. SCFC 13A-4(b)(4)
- Combustible material shall be removed from the property. SCFC 13A-4(b)(5)

REQUIREMENTS FOR ZONES 1 AND 2:

- Maintain a ten-foot minimum clearance next to roadsides and driveways. More may be required. SCFC 13A-4(A)(3)
- Logs and stumps embedded in the soil must be removed or isolated from structures and other vegetation. PRC§4291 (A)(1)
- Remove all dead or dying brush or trees, and all dead or dying tree branches within 15 feet of the ground. PRC§4291 (A)(1)

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Clear all flammable vegetation, trash and other combustible materials 10 feet around and above propane tanks. CFC 3807.3
- Help fire and medical responders find your Address numbers must have 4 inch minimum lettering on a contrasting background and be clearly visible from the street or access road. CFC 505.1; SCFC 13A-8

VERTICAL CLEARANCE "LADDER FUELS" - FIRE USES BRUSH AND SMALLER TREES TO CLIMB UP INTO TALL TREES.

MINIMUM HORIZONTAL SPACING FOR TREES AND SHRUBS

MINIMUM VERTICAL SPACING BETWEEN TREES AND SHRUBS

Remove all tree branches at least 6 feet from the ground.

If shrubs are under trees, additional vertical space may be needed. The lack of vertical space can allow a fire to move from the ground to the shrub to the tree like a ladder.

EXAMPLE:
A five-foot shrub is growing under a tree.
5 x 3 = 15 feet of clearance needed between the top of the shrub and the lowest tree branch.

¹ PRC, Public Resource Code
² SCFC, Sonoma County Fire Code Ordinance
³ CFC, California Fire Code
⁴ CBC, California Building Code
⁵ For properties located in a Local Responsibility Area LRA, see SCFC 13A-2

Inspection

- Notice of upcoming inspections
 - Educational
 - 30 days prior to first inspection
 - Explains requirements and how to comply
 - Recommends property owner brings property into compliance before first inspection.

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 SONOMA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT INSPECTIONS HELP TO ENSURE YOU ARE IN COMPLIANCE, BUT IT IS UP TO OWNERS TO UNDERSTAND AND IMPLEMENT THESE FIRESAFE PRACTICES

Your home and property may be your most important investment. Protect your investment and help give firefighters a fighting chance by keeping a good defensible space around your home.

ZONE 1: 0-30 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, DECKS, ETC.
 The "Defensible Space Zone" Keep it lean, clean, and green to ensure that wind-blown embers don't ignite materials near your home, exposing it to flames.
 • Remove all branches within 10 feet of any stovepipe or chimney outlet.
 • Remove leaves, needles or other vegetation on roofs, gutters, decks, porches, stairways, etc.
 • Remove all dead or dying trees, branches, shrubs or other plants adjacent to or overhanging buildings.
 • Prune lower branches of trees to a height of 6 to 15 feet or 1/3 tree height for trees under 18 feet.
 • Remove all dead or dying grass, leaves, needles or other vegetation.
 • Remove or separate any flammable ground cover and shrubs.
 • Climbing vines must be removed from trees and structures.
 • Spark arrestors are required on all chimneys and stovepipes, and must have metal screen openings between 3/8 inch and 1/4 inch.
 • Don't allow flammable mulch or tree duff to pile up against house siding. Maintain at least 6 inches of clearance, preferably more. Recommended:
 • Stone mulch or wood chips at least 30 feet from structures, and clear 10 feet around and 15 feet above combustible piles. Never store flammable materials under decks or against house walls.
 • Remove combustible debris, such as trash, cardboard, or wood near buildings.
ZONE 2: 30-100 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, DECKS, ETC.
 The "Reduced Fuel Zone." Reducing fuels in Zone 2 will help reduce the energy and spread of an oncoming wildfire, thus creating a landscape that will not readily transmit fire to the home.
 • Mow dead or dying grass to a maximum of 4 inches in height. Trimmings may remain on the ground.
 • Live flammable ground cover less than 18 inches in height may remain, but overhanging and adjacent trees must be pruned to a height of 6 to 15 feet.
 • Large trees do not have to be cut and removed as long as all of the plants beneath them are maintained to provide the appropriate spacing, see Vertical Spacing diagram.
NEIGHBORING PROPERTY
 Remove all dead plant material and vegetation deep to both your yard and your home.
UNIMPROVED PARCELS:
 SCFC 13A-48) applies to unimproved parcels of 5 acres or less in unincorporated areas:
 • Flammable vegetation and other combustible growth within 10 feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage shall be removed.
 • Dead and dying vegetation within 10 feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage shall be removed.
 • Grass and combustible surface vegetation within ten feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage must be trimmed to less than four inches in height unless necessary for erosion control.
 • All trees within ten feet of neighboring structures and roadway frontage must be pruned to at least six feet above grade.
 • Combustible material shall be removed from the property.
VERTICAL CLEARANCE "LADDER FUELS" - FIRE USES BRUSH AND SMALLER TREES TO CLIMB UP INTO TALL TREES.
 8 FOOT MINIMUM CLEARANCE
MINIMUM HORIZONTAL SPACING FOR TREES AND SHRUBS
 10 FT MINIMUM SPACING
MINIMUM VERTICAL SPACING BETWEEN TREES AND SHRUBS
 Remove all tree branches at least 6 feet from the ground.
 If shrubs are under trees, additional vertical space may be needed. The lack of vertical space can allow a fire to move from the ground to the shrub to the tree like a ladder.
 EXAMPLE:
 A five-foot shrub is growing under a tree.
 5 x 3 = 15 feet of clearance needed between the top of the shrub and the lowest tree branch.
 HPG, Public Resource Code
 SCFC, Sonoma County Fire Code Ordinance
 CFC, California Fire Code
 CBC, California Building Code
 For information related to a Local Responsibility Area LRA, see SCFC 13A-4

Inspection and Abatement Processes

- First inspection 30+ days after mailing
- Notice of Violation (NOV) left on property or mailed to properties not in compliance. 30 days to comply. NOV must:
 - Specify corrective actions
 - Order the property owners to abate within thirty (30) calendar days
 - Provide the property owner the opportunity to appeal before abatement
 - Notification via US Mail.
- Abatement process can start 30 days after first NOV

Sonoma County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

- County of Sonoma received FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant received to update County CWPP
- Benefits: Identification and Prioritization of fuels reduction programs
- Community education and organization
 - Requirements
 - Developed Collaboratively
 - Provides a list of prioritized fuels reduction projects
 - Addresses structural hardening
- Meetings coming to a community near you!
 - We will request your help as the project rolls out.

For Questions or More Information:

Sonoma County Fire Marshal, James Williams

Phone: (707) 565-1154

Email: James.Williams@sonoma-county.org

Stats 2019—IMPROVED, First Inspections

Fire District Name	Proposed # of Inspections	Total # of Inspections Completed	% Completed	# Inspected in VIOLATION	% Inspected VIOLATION	# Inspected COMPLIANT	% Inspected COMPLIANT
Bodega Bay FPD	174	161	92.53%	0	0.00%	161	100.00%
Cloverdale FPD	191	151	79.06%	42	27.81%	109	72.19%
Forestville FPD	143	60	41.96%	52	86.67%	8	13.33%
Geyserville FPD	252	238	94.44%	23	9.66%	213	89.50%
Gold Ridge FPD	185	181	97.84%	42	23.20%	138	76.24%
Kenwood FPD	78	56	71.79%	52	92.86%	4	7.14%
Monte Rio FPD	101	43	42.57%	14	32.56%	29	67.44%
Occidental CSD	255	198	77.65%	166	83.84%	32	16.16%
Rancho Adobe FPD	274	107	39.05%	67	62.62%	35	32.71%
Permit Sonoma-Fire I	403	326	80.89%	173	53.07%	131	40.18%
Sonoma County FD	461	105	22.78%	12	11.43%	93	88.57%
Sonoma Valley FRA	283	273	96.47%	222	81.32%	51	18.68%
Timber Cove FPD	96	102	106.25%	102	100.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL	2896	2001	69.10%	967	48.33%	1004	50.17%

Stats 2019—IMPROVED, Second Inspections

Fire District Name	Number of Violations 1st	Number of Second Insp Completed	% Completed	# Compliant	% Compliant after First	% Compliant after Second
Bodega Bay FPD	0	0	0.00%		37.50%	
Cloverdale FPD	42	20	47.62%	13	70.00%	65.00%
Forestville FPD	52	0	0.00%		26.09%	
Geyserville FPD	23	5	21.74%	5	92.11%	100.00%
Gold Ridge FPD	42	3	7.14%	3	60.00%	100.00%
Kenwood FPD	52	10	19.23%	5	0.00%	50.00%
Monte Rio FPD	14	0	0.00%		0.00%	
Occidental CSD	166	0	0.00%		45.45%	
Rancho Adobe FPD	67	0	0.00%		57.89%	
Hermit Sonoma-Fire Pre	173	0	0.00%		70.07%	
Sonoma County FD	12	0	0.00%		74.40%	
Sonoma Valley FRA	222	205	92.34%	148	15.38%	72.20%
Timber Cove FPD	102	0	0.00%		0.00%	
TOTAL	967	243		174	0	

Stats 2019—UNIMPROVED, First Inspections

Fire District Name	Proposed # of Inspections	Total # of Inspections Completed	% Completed	# Inspected in VIOLATION	% Inspected VIOLATION	# Inspected COMPLIANT	% Inspected COMPLIANT
Bodega Bay FPD	66	64	96.97%	40	62.50%	24	37.50%
Cloverdale FPD	17	10	58.82%	3	30.00%	7	70.00%
Forestville FPD	83	23	27.71%	17	73.91%	6	26.09%
Geyserville FPD	43	38	88.37%	3	7.89%	35	92.11%
Gold Ridge FPD	27	10	37.04%	4	40.00%	6	60.00%
Kenwood FPD	28	11	39.29%	11	100.00%	0	0.00%
Monte Rio FPD	160	1	0.63%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Occidental CSD	29	11	37.93%	6	54.55%	5	45.45%
Rancho Adobe FPD	48	19	39.58%	8	42.11%	11	57.89%
Permit Sonoma-Fire I	121	137	113.22%	39	28.47%	96	70.07%
Sonoma County FD	239	250	104.60%	64	25.60%	186	74.40%
Sonoma Valley FRA	109	91	83.49%	72	79.12%	14	15.38%
Timber Cove FPD	73	73	100.00%	71	97.26%	2	2.74%
TOTAL	1043	738	70.76%	338	45.80%	392	53.12%

Stats 2019—UNIMPROVED, Second Inspections

Fire District Name	Number of Violations 1st	Number of Second Insp Completed	% Completed	# Compliant	% Compliant after Second	% Compliant after First
Bodega Bay FPD	40	0	0.00%			37.50%
Cloverdale FPD	3	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	70.00%
Forestville FPD	17	0	0.00%			26.09%
Geyserville FPD	3	0	0.00%			92.11%
Gold Ridge FPD	4	0	0.00%			60.00%
Kenwood FPD	11	0	0.00%			0.00%
Monte Rio FPD	0	0	0.00%			0.00%
Occidental CSD	6	0	0.00%			45.45%
Rancho Adobe FPD	8	0	0.00%			57.89%
Hermit Sonoma-Fire Pre	39	0	0.00%			70.07%
Sonoma County FD	64	0	0.00%			74.40%
Sonoma Valley FRA	72	10	13.89%	10	100.00%	15.38%
Timber Cove FPD	71	0	0.00%			2.74%
TOTAL	338	11	3.25%			53.12%