
EXEMPT ACTIVITY INFORMATION PACKET

This packet outlines activities that do not require a Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) environmental review permit or approval, per TRPA [Code of Ordinances](#) Section 2.3. If you do not see a project on this list, it may require environmental review permit or approval.

ACTIVITIES EXEMPT FROM TRPA ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Demolition

Demolition of structures, improvements, or facilities, less than 50 years of age is Exempt, provided that any associated grading is also Exempt (see Grading section below). **To obtain credit for land coverage or existing development, TRPA verification is required prior to demolition.** Verification of land coverage or existing development requires a separate application to TRPA.

Fences

Fence Repair and Replacement (Non-shorezone): Repair or replacement of existing fences that are not located in Stream Environment Zones (SEZs), the backshore, or bodies of water is considered Exempt by TRPA provided that any associated grading does not exceed 3 cubic yards.

Construction of New Residential Fences (Non-shorezone): Construction of new residential fences is considered Exempt, provided that:

- The fence is not more than six feet high;
- The fence does not obstruct the public's view of Lake Tahoe;
- The fence will not be located in a Stream Environment Zone (SEZ), the backshore, or a body of water; and
- Any associated grading, excavation, or filling is less than three cubic yards.

Grading, Excavation, Filling And Backfilling

Grading, excavation, or filling less than three cubic yards is considered Exempt, provided that:

- The associated grading, excavation, or filling does not exceed three cubic yards;
- The work is completed within 48 hours;
- The excavation site is stabilized to prevent erosion;

- The grading, excavation, or filling does not occur during periods of precipitation, when the site is covered with snow, or is in a saturated, muddy or unstable condition; and
- The grading, excavation, or filling is not part of a series of excavations that, when viewed as a whole, would require a TRPA permit.

Landscaping

Landscaping and gardening is considered Exempt, provided that:

- The additional or new landscaping and gardening is NOT located in a Stream Environment Zone or backshore.
- The landscaping is in accordance with the [TRPA Handbook of Best Management Practices](#) requirements for fertilizer use and the [TRPA plant list](#);
- There is no creation or relocation of land coverage (e.g., pathways);
- Any associated grading, excavation, or filling is Exempt (see Grading section, above); and
- The natural slope of the site is maintained (i.e., no terracing or recontouring).

Repairs and Remodeling

Interior remodeling: Considered Exempt, provided that:

- The activity does not result in the addition of land coverage or relocation of land coverage; and
- There is no change or intensification of use or increase in density; and
- Structural remodeling of a commercial or tourist accommodation structure does not exceed \$40,000—materials only.

Ordinary Maintenance and Repair: Ordinary maintenance and repair, defined as the upkeep, or preservation of the condition of property, unless in the Shorezone, is considered Exempt.

Maintenance and repair includes the replacement of, or modification to, parts of a structure that do not affect the weight bearing or strength capacity of the structure provided there is no additional land coverage or an increase in the dimensions of the structure including height, width, and length.

Maintenance and repair activities include: painting, re-roofing with non-metallic material, replacement of windows, siding, doors, construction of overlays upon existing paved surfaces, and replacement or repair of air conditioning, sewer, water, electrical equipment, and other fixtures.

For such repairs or activities that will take place in the Shorezone, see the [Shorezone QE packet](#). For structures visible from [Scenic Threshold Travel Routes, the Public Recreation Areas, and Bicycle Trails](#), painting and siding shall be consistent with TRPA [Code of Ordinances](#) Section 36.6.1.C.

Mail Box Receptacles: Mail delivery receptacles and support structures are considered Exempt, provided that:

- The receptacle and support structure(s) comply with all U.S. Postal standards;
- The location of the receptacle and support structure(s) can be accessed by mail delivery vehicles such that the vehicles will not cause compaction or disturbance of previously uncompacted or undisturbed areas; and
- Dark shades or earthtone colors and matte finishes are used if the receptacle is located along Highways 28, 50, 89, 207, 267, or 431, or Pioneer Trail.

Replacement of Combustion Heaters and Woodstoves: Replacement of combustion heaters (water or space) and woodstoves with units on TRPA's list of approved combustion heaters is considered Exempt by TRPA.

Temporary Activities

General Temporary Activities: A temporary activity which meets the following criteria is considered Exempt:

- Does not cause parking on unpaved areas;
- Does not create or relocate land coverage or disturbance;
- Does not require closure of a traffic lane or intersection of a state or federal highway for more than one hour, or the closure of U.S. Highway 50 at any point between the South Wye and Kingsbury Grade for any period of time;
- Does not create noise in excess of the limits allowed in Chapter 68 of the TRPA [Code of Ordinances](#);
- Does not exceed fourteen consecutive calendar days in duration and will not occur more than four times in a calendar year; and
- If the location of the activity is unpaved, it has not been used for temporary projects more than four times the past calendar year.

Special Event Areas: Temporary activities in TRPA-designated special event areas are considered Exempt. In general, designated special event areas only exist within [TRPA-approved Community Plans](#). Designated special event areas typically have adequate facilities (e.g., parking, bathrooms) for temporary events.

Tree Removal

Dead Tree Removal on Parcels less than 5 acres: Dead tree removal is considered Exempt under the following circumstances:

- The parcel is less than 5 acres.
- In Nevada or on the north shore, east of Carnelian Bay, if the tree is less than 24 inches dbh*.
- Elsewhere in California, if the tree is less than 30 inches dbh*.

If a dead tree is larger than 24"/30" dbh*, respective to location, and is located in residential or commercial areas, dead tree removal is considered Exempt.

Removal of Tree Limbs: The removal of dead limbs and the removal of live limbs not resulting in material damage to a tree are considered Exempt. Material Damage is defined as any of the following alterations to a live tree at least six inches dbh*: (1) topping; (2) the removal of live limbs within the upper two thirds of the total tree height; (3) girdling; (4) the application of harmful chemicals; (5) purposefully exposing the cambium layer; or (6) other damage to the tree that will potentially result in death or disfigurement, or in a significant increase in its susceptibility to insects or disease. See the TRPA Tree Removal Application for specific guidelines in regards to pruning for safety. *The removal or trimming of trees for the purposes of view enhancement is prohibited and is considered a violation.*

* **dbh** = the diameter of the tree measured 4.5 feet above the highest ground at the base of the tree.

Other Activities

Home Occupations: Incidental occupation, secondary to the use of a dwelling for residential purposes and conducted entirely within a dwelling by the residents thereof, are considered Exempt, provided that:

- There are no sales of products not produced on the premises, unless the sales are done by written order with no commodities or displays on the premises;
- There is employment of no more than one person other than the dwelling residents;
- There are no signs or structures advertising the occupation;
- There is no more than one home occupation carried on in the dwelling; and
- There is no outside storage of materials or supplies incidental to the home occupation.

Seasonal Lighting Displays: Seasonal lighting displays which are displayed between Thanksgiving and March 1st of the following year are considered Exempt.

Parcel Consolidations: Parcel consolidations are considered Exempt provided that deed restrictions permanently consolidating the parcels are recorded by the affected owner(s).

TRPA credit for any development rights that may be associated with the parcels must be obtained prior to the consolidation; a separate TRPA application is required to bank a development right.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please be advised, even activities exempt from TRPA environmental review may require review and approval with the local building department. Please visit the appropriate website to learn more:

- City of South Lake Tahoe [Permit Center](#)
- El Dorado County [Building Services](#)
- Placer County [Building Services](#)
- Washoe County [Building & Safety](#)
- Douglas County [Building Division](#)

For all other proposed projects and activities, please visit TRPA's [Applications & Forms webpage](#).

For TRPA parcel and permit records, please visit the [Parcel Tracker](#).

TRPA strives to provide excellent customer service. We hope this packet answered all of your questions on exempt activities. If not, please call TRPA at (775) 588-4547, visit [TRPA.org](#), or come in to our front counter. We are here to assist you.

Phone Hours: Monday – Friday
 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Front Counter Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday (Closed Tuesdays)
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.