

News

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Forest Views 'Air Curtain Destructors'

Idaho City, Idaho – An “Air Curtain Destructor,” which could be an effective tool to reduce wildfire danger, was tested recently near Idaho City. The equipment can cleanly burn green vegetation, such as limbs and branches, which could be an effective means to reduce residual smoke and dangerous fuel buildups near communities and in the forest.

“This could be one more tool to reduce hazardous fuels like small diameter trees and brush with little or no commercial value, while minimizing environmental impacts,” said Leonard Roeber, project coordinator at Idaho City Ranger District. “Communities within the urban interface areas may consider the equipment as a means to dispose of excess fuels around their homes thereby reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires.”

The Air Curtain Destructor, or air burner, is a self-contained, portable, refractory lined incinerator system. It can effectively dispose of forest waste by burning the material at a very high temperature using high velocity air within the combustion chamber.

“The high turbulence along with increased combustion time and temperatures in excess of 1800 °F, result in complete combustion and reduced air emissions compared to pile or broadcast burning,” said Gary Ford, a representative from Air Burners LLC. “Depending on the system used, the burners can consume from 1 to 15 tons of wood material per hour with a volume reduction of approximately 98 percent.”

The air burners effectively consume a variety of materials from green fuel to red slash and have few restrictions related to weather or burn conditions.

“I see some real opportunities for urban interface communities in solving lots of problems with excess fuels,” said Dean Graham, USDA Regional Wood Utilization Specialist.

For further information, call the Idaho City Ranger District at 208-392-3700.

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