

## WHAT IS... A Back Fire?

## FIRE FACT SHEET

**B**ackfiring is an indirect method of attack. It is the act of setting fire along the inner edge of a fireline to.

- » Consume the fuel in the path of a wildland fire.
- » Change the direction or force of the fire's convection column.
- » Slow or change the fire's rate of spread.

### Backfiring Objectives

The primary objectives of backfiring are:

- » To eliminate fuel in advance of the fire, thus widening the fireline.
- » To change the direction of the fire.
- » To slow the fire's progress, allowing more time for suppression actions.
- » To stop or reduce the fire's intensity and allow direct attack on the head of the fire.

### Planning & Coordination

Backfiring is an effective tactic against wildland fire, but because of the complexity, it generally requires more planning and coordination than burning out.

The following items need to be evaluated before conducting a backfire operation:

- » Current and expected fire behavior
- » Timing
- » Location of control lines
- » Anchor points
- » Safety zones or escape routes
- » Control line preparation
- » Equipment for firing and holding
- » Firing methods and techniques
- » Organization
- » Coordination
- » Communications



*Left: Backfiring operations behind the LANL Emergency Operations Center during the Las Conchas fire.*

### For more information:

LANL Fire Wildfire Management Planning Website: <http://www.LANLWildlandfire.com>