



**FIREWISE USA®**  
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

# Firewise Communities

County of Los Angeles Fire Department – Forestry Division – Fire Plan Unit



# Why Become a Firewise Community?

When residents get together in their neighborhood it can make a huge difference against the risk of wildfire.

Firewise USA is designed to help you do that!

Organize

Stay in touch

Sense of community

Possible financial benefits, project funding opportunities, some insurance benefits, identify community leaders

# Firewise Application Process: Overview

- **Steps to Becoming a Firewise USA Community**
- Make a neighborhood committee, hold some meetings
- The key point of Firewise is to organize communities with a Fire Prevention message to spread in their community
- It usually takes a hand full of people to help organize
- A good method is to split the community up into zones or blocks
  - Example: An HOA of 60 homes – split the HOA into 4 zones and have one block captain for each zone – this helps distribute the information through several trusted neighbors to the entire community
- Organize meetings and keep people informed with newsletters and/or door hangers
- Log Fire Prevention Work completed through Firewise Timekeeping Sheets

## Step 1: Planning

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Plan site boundaries

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Examine every home within your HOA

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Need to have a map drawn up to show area

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This can be a simple google map with a line drawn around your community

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Track volunteer hours or work done with Firewise USA Work Logs

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Start your online application to become a Firewise community

## Step 2: Community Risk Assessment

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Contact your State Liaison

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County of Los Angeles Fire Department - Forestry Division is the State Liaison in LA County

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Contact: [Fire-ForestryPublicinfo@fire.lacounty.gov](mailto:Fire-ForestryPublicinfo@fire.lacounty.gov)

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LA County Fire Forester will conduct a Community Wildfire Risk Assessment (CRA) of the proposed Firewise Community

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This is a general overview of the community on what they are doing well for fire prevention and what things they need to improve on

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Not individual for Homeowners, it is an assessment of the community as a whole

# Assessment Example

- **Home:** General building construction. Are the homes made of **ignition resistant building materials**?
- Roofing materials: composite shingles, metal, cement tile and clay
  - Greater than 75% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
  - 50–75% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
  - 25–50% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
  - Less than 25% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
- Soffit vents: a screened vent on the underside component of the eaves that allows air to flow to the attic or the space below roof sheathing
  - Greater than 75% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
  - 50–74% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
  - 25–50% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
  - Less than 25% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening

## Step 4: Make an Action Plan

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The board/committee will use the risk assessment to create a **Three-Year Action Plan**, broken down by year, that identifies and prioritizes actions to reduce ignition risk to homes.

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Example: We want 50% of the community to do upgrades to 1/8inch mesh screens in attic vent covers by end of year 1. Or participants will strive to complete annually a percentage of vegetation management on property. These can also be spread out over multiple years.

# Annual Requirements

- Each year, neighbors complete educational and risk reduction actions identified in the plan. These go towards your site's annual reporting efforts.
- Activities that count towards your investment.
- Use our [volunteer hourly worksheet](#) (PDF) to collect information from residents in your community
- At a minimum, each site is required to annually invest the equivalent of one volunteer hour per dwelling unit in wildfire risk reduction actions. **If your site has identified 100 homes within its boundary, then 100 hours of work or the monetary equivalent**, based on the [independent sector value of volunteer time](#), **need to be completed for that year** (\$31.80 per household as of 2024).
- **Tell us about it -** [Fire-ForestryPublicinfo@fire.lacounty.gov](mailto:Fire-ForestryPublicinfo@fire.lacounty.gov)
- When the above criteria have been met, the Resident Leader applies for recognition through the Firewise® Portal ([portal.firewise.org](https://portal.firewise.org)), describing educational and mitigation work in the site.
- Each year, sites renew their status by reporting their activity.





**FIREWISE USA®**  
Residents reducing wildfire risks

Thank you,  
LACoFD Fire Plan Unit

