
HAMMOND RANCH FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

WILDFIRE HANDBOOK



THE HAMMOND RANCH FIRESAFE COUNCIL

The Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting wildfire safety to protect our community from dangerous wildfires. We welcome your help and participation. We are currently working on the following projects:

- *Hammond Ranch Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).*
- *Emergency Evacuation.*
- *Wildfire Fuel Reduction Projects.*
- *Wildfire Home and Road Risk Assessment.*
- *Home Protection-100-ft Defensible Space.*
- *Road and Home Address Signs.*
- *Fire Fighting Water Storage Tanks.*
- *Wildfire Safety Education.*

If you need information or would like to work on any of these projects, please contact us at www.hammondlandowners.org. We welcome your participation!!

WELCOME FROM THE HAMMOND RANCH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY:



"VOLUNTEERS WANTED" So reads the sign in front of almost every volunteer fire department in Siskiyou County. The sign should read: "EMERGENCY—EMERGENCY!! FIRE DEPARTMENT IN DESPERATE NEED OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS. CALL YESTERDAY"

But for the sake of limited space on the sign and some dignity, the sign simply reads "Volunteers Wanted." Over ninety percent of all firefighters in Siskiyou County are volunteers and without them our emergency response system would collapse. The trend in the past five years is

senior Firefighters are retiring and are not being replaced by new volunteers--hence the ranks are getting fewer and fewer.

So what does this mean to you? The bottom line--it means extended response time for emergency calls for service and in this business that's a very bad thing. No one ever plans to need our service be it for fire, medical, rescue, auto accident or natural disaster but it is nice to know that if you do, we will be there.

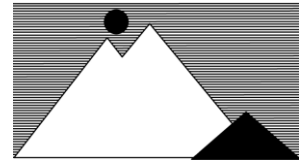
Volunteer Firefighters are neighbors helping neighbors in a time of need. The job is hard and demanding and pays nothing but when someone in need says "Thank You" the rewards are priceless. If you are looking for a way to serve your community, give us a call and see what it is all about.

Dave Jenkins--Fire Chief, Hammond Ranch Fire Company
Contact Dave at: 530-938-4200

WELCOME FROM THE HAMMOND RANCH LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Hammond Landowners Association, Inc. is a concerned landowners volunteer organization.

Our Mission Statement is to provide information, to assist in the coordination of group actions, to determine guidelines and make suggestions in matters relating to the development and use of property on Hammond Ranch. It's also social. There's opportunities to meet neighbors at the annual picnic and annual luncheon meeting.



A few reasons for landowners to become members are:

- HLA negotiates with the County for needed improvements and support for Hammond Ranch.
- HLA promotes the maintenance of our roads by coordinating upgrades and by reimbursing road maintenance costs according to a prescribed schedule established by the HLA Board. Currently, two thirds of HLA's annual budget (your dues) goes toward road maintenance costs.
- HLA has a website that is helping to inform residents of issues related to the Ranch.
- HLA members are eligible to purchase PHI (Mercy Air) emergency medical evacuation services at a discounted rate.
- HLA publishes a quarterly newsletter informing members of important issues, with articles of interest to the Ranch.
- HLA members are working with road committees, the Fire Department as well as County and local Fire Safe Councils.
- Annual luncheon meeting in November each year.
- Annual picnic in July each year.

Also, in 2017 HLA adopted a policy of wildfire protection which included the formation of an internal Firesafe council to assist landowners with fire prevention.

Check us out at www.hammondlandowners.org and join.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A WILDFIRE?

Wildfires are dangerous. A fast moving wildfire creates dangerous heat, dense smoke, and clouds of airborne fire embers. In the Hammond Ranch area, abundant forest fuels, hilly terrain, and high winds allow wildfires to quickly explode out of control.



YOUR SAFETY--You might be required to evacuate with very little warning. Your evacuation route might be a narrow, one-lane dirt road with dense smoke and flammable vegetation burning at the side. Your route might be blocked with inbound fire fighters and outbound panic stricken drivers.

YOUR HOME SAFETY-- Your home might not be protected by firefighters. Firefighters will not defend your home if you have not created a safe "Defensible Space" around your home.

PREPARE---ANTICIPATE--EVACUATE

Preparation is the key to wildfire safety. Evaluate your level of preparation by considering the following questions:

- EVACUATION ROUTE--**Do you have a safe road for emergency evacuation and incoming Fire fighting vehicles? Does your evacuation route provide continuous safe travel from your home to a place of safety?
- EMERGENCY EVACUATION--**Are you prepared to quickly evacuate with only a few minutes warning? Do you have important records, family heirlooms, special medicines, and pets packed and ready to go? Do you have an evacuation plan?
- HOME DEFENSE--**Is your home protected against wildfire? Do you have "Defensible Space" around your home to protect firefighters? Can your home survive a wildfire without firefighter assistance?
- HOME ADDRESS SIGN--**Can emergency services such as firefighting, medical, and sheriff quickly locate your home? Is your home clearly identified with an address sign that can be seen during difficult conditions such as heavy smoke, darkness, and snow drifts?

This booklet is intended to provide ideas to help you prepare for a wildfire. We hope you use this information to improve your wildfire safety. We encourage you to contact and work with the Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council. We welcome your comments and suggestions!!

#1--YOUR EVACUATION ROUTE

ROADS & DRIVEWAYS-- It is essential that you have an evacuation route that allows safe travel for both your evacuation and incoming fire department vehicles.

Current California regulations in wildfire areas require roads that provide safe access for both civilian evacuation and inbound wildland fire equipment occurring at the same time. Few roads in the Hammond Ranch Fire District meet the current regulations. At this time, the regulations are not retroactive to existing roads. It is hoped that landowners will use the following regulations for future road improvements.



- Roads should be a minimum 20-ft wide and designed to support a 75,000-lb wildland fire vehicle.
- Dead end roads (parcels zoned 5 to 20-acres), should not exceed ½ mile in length; have a minimum 40-ft radius turn-around at the end of the road and a turnaround at mid-point.
- Home Driveways should be a minimum 10-ft wide with a 15-ft clear vertical clearance. Driveways greater than 150-ft long but less than 800-ft should have a turnout at the midpoint.
- Driveway Gates should have a minimum 14-ft horizontal clearance and an unobstructed 15-ft vertical clearance. Gates should be located 30-ft from the roadway and should allow a vehicle to stop at the gate without obstructing road traffic.

HAZARDOUS VEGETATION ALONG THE ROAD--

An evacuation route can easily be blocked by hazardous vegetation burning across the road. It is essential that this hazardous vegetation be removed.

Vegetation such as dead trees; shrubs; bushes, branches; dried grass, weeds and flammable undergrowth (ladder fuels) should be removed to a minimum 10-ft from the side of the road. Mature trees should have their lower limbs removed to a minimum 10-feet from the ground or about 1/3 of the height for smaller trees. Narrow roads should have the hazardous vegetation removed for a greater distance.



At this time, the removal of hazardous vegetation is dependent upon voluntary action by the landowners. Work with your neighbors to get cooperation to remove this dangerous roadside fuel.

#3—HOME DEFENSE--

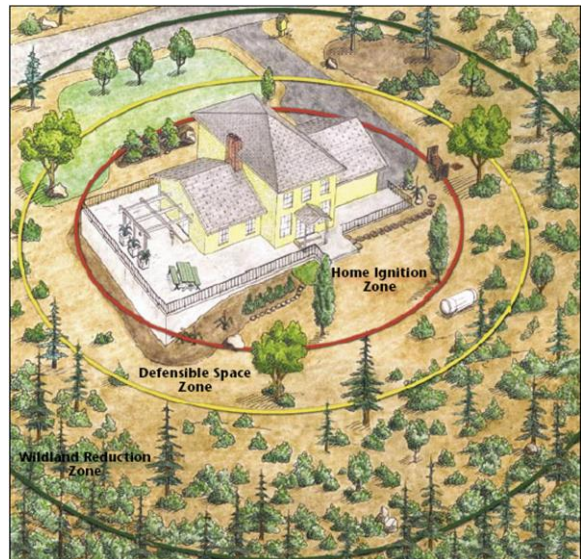
Research findings prove that home survival is NOT a random, miraculous or “dumb luck” event. Homeowners can tremendously improve the chance of home survival by implementing easy wildfire prevention activities. Some of these activities are mandatory under California law.

The key is to create a "Defensible Space" around your home. “Defensible Space” is the area between the home and an oncoming wildfire. In this space, vegetation and other fuels are modified to reduce the threat from wildfire.

For the most part, creating a “Defensible Space” involves routine gardening using common tools such as a pruning saw, pruning shears, loppers, weed-eater, shovel, and rake. Creating a “Defensible Space” does not require removal of all vegetation.

STEPS TO CREATING A “DEFENSIBLE SPACE”

STEP 1. DETERMINE THE SIZE OF THE “DEFENSIBLE SPACE”: The size of the “Defensible Space” is a distance extending outward from the home in all directions. The recommended distance might not be the same in each direction. The distance will vary depending on the dominant vegetation type and steepness of slope in each direction. Use the following chart to determine the recommended distances.



***RECOMMENDED “DEFENSIBLE SPACE” DISTANCES**

| Dominant Type of <u>Vegetation</u> | Flat to Gently Sloping <u>0 to 20% slope</u> | Moderately Steep <u>21-40% slope</u> | Steep Terrain 41% or greater slope |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| GRASSES | 100-feet | 100-feet | 100-feet |
| SHRUBS | 100-feet | 200-feet | 200-feet |
| TREES | 100-feet | 100-feet | 200-feet |

*Notes--

1-California Public Resources law 4290 requires a minimum of either 100-foot space or distance to the nearest property line. Many fire professionals believe these distances are inadequate and recommend the increased distances specified in the above chart.

2--If the recommended defensible distance exceeds your property boundaries, obtain permission from adjacent landowner before doing any work on their property.

STEP 2. REMOVE DEAD VEGETATION:

Remove dead vegetation within the “Defensible Space” Zone. Dead vegetation includes dead trees; shrubs; bushes, branches; dried grass, weeds and flowers.

Remove dead surface litter such as tree needles, twigs, bark, small branches, cones and leaves as follows:

- From the home to 30-feet- Remove dead surface litter routinely throughout fire season. Remove all surface litter from the home roof, decks, and rain gutters.
- From 30 to 100-feet from the home- Remove and maintain dead surface litter to a depth less than 4-inches.

STEP 3. CREATE SEPARATION BETWEEN TREES AND SHRUBS:

Thin or remove overgrown trees and shrubs to create open spaces. Experts recommend a 10-foot distance between individual trees and shrubs. Do not allow highly flammable trees and shrubs (such as Jeffrey pine, Juniper, White fir, Sagebrush, and Manzanita) to grow in a dense stand.



STEP 4. REMOVE LOWER TREE LIMBS: Remove lower tree limbs to 10-feet from the ground or about 1/3 of the height for smaller trees. Remove the flammable undergrowth to prevent wildfire from spreading from the ground into the trees.

STEP 5. CREATE A "NONCOMBUSTIBLE AREA" AT LEAST 5-FOOT WIDE AROUND YOUR HOME:

This is the critical area for protection of the home. Landscape this area using noncombustible materials such as gravel and rock. Avoid using bark, wood mulches, landscape timber, or other wood products. Ensure landscaping plants in this area are low growing (less than 18" high), fire resistant, well watered, and maintained. Avoid planting trees in this area.

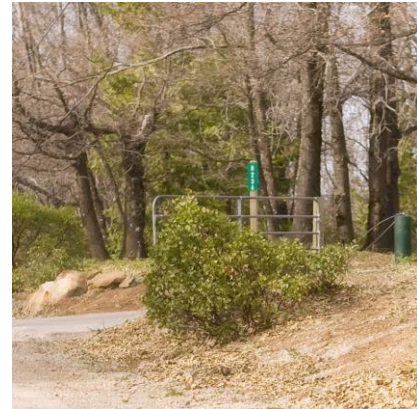
STEP 6. ADDITIONAL HOME DEFENSE ITEMS:

- Remove all tree limbs that extend within 10 feet of a chimney or stovepipe.
- Remove all dead and dying wood from any tree that is next to or overhanging any building.
- Remove all leaves, needles, and other dead vegetation from the roof and rain gutters.
- Install and maintain a screen over the outlet of every chimney or stovepipe.
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STEP 7. MAINTAIN THE NEW "LEAN, CLEAN, GREEN AREA: Creating “Defensible Space” is only part of the job. Defensible Space must be maintained. Ensure plants are well watered and dead growth is removed. Do not allow wildfire fuel to accumulate!!

#4—HOME ADDRESS IDENTIFICATION

In an emergency, it is essential that medical, fire, and sheriff responders can quickly locate your home. Do not assume that responders can locate your home using your cell phone or GPS coordinates. An address sign is the only reliable method to identify your home in an emergency.



Current wildfire regulations include the following:

- A permanently posted address sign should be placed at each driveway entrance.
- The Address sign should be visible from the road fronting the property.
- The Address sign should be visible from both directions of travel along the road.
- The Address sign should be plainly legible.
- Address numbers should be 4" letter height.
- Address signs should be reflectorized with a contrasting background color.

Remember to locate your address sign so it does not get blocked by snow or vegetation and is clearly visible at night. It must be clearly visible under all conditions.

ADDITIONAL WILDFIRE INFORMATION--

This handbook is a condensed listing of wildfire safety items. You are encouraged to contact the Firesafe Council or the Fire Department for additional information.

The internet has many excellent sources of important wildfire information. Good starting websites are: www.preventwildfireca.org www.firewise.org www.fireadapted.org

CONGRATULATIONS--

Congratulations if you have completed the above tasks. You and your home should have a better chance to survive a wildfire.

This is a great start, but there is more that needs to be done. We need to build a "Wildfire Safe Community". Start by joining the Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council. Visit our website at: www.hammondlandowners.org

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HAMMOND RANCH FIRE DEPARTMENT PHOTO-COURTESY JACK HOWARD-HAMMOND RANCH HANDBOOK PREPARED-APRIL 2017