

Mesa Cortina Firewise Committee Newsletter

February, 2025

The Board of the Cortina Property Owners Association has approved a plan to obtain Firewise USA® recognition for the Mesa Cortina neighborhood. We have created this email address for the committee to connect with our neighbors and for you to contact us regarding the new program.

What is Firewise?

Firewise USA provides a collaborative framework to help neighborhoods get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community and to reduce wildfire risks at the local level. Any community that meets a set of voluntary criteria on an annual basis may identify itself as being a Firewise neighborhood. This recognition provides several advantages including: increased community awareness about wildfire risks, access to educational resources, potential insurance discounts, improved property values, a safer environment for firefighters, and a sense of collective responsibility to mitigate wildfire damage. Summit County grants are also available to Firewise communities that apply and meet the requirements that will cover half of the cost of tree removal on your property (we will apply in November 2025).

Mark your calendar with two upcoming events

1. Mesa Cortina community volunteer Work Day on **July 12**
2. The County Chipping Week from **July 21-25**.

Mesa Cortina Firewise website page

We have added a Firewise webpage to the Mesa Cortina website at <https://mesacortina.com/firewise>. On the page you can find more information about our Firewise program, including the complete video of the education portion of the HOA meeting, the PowerPoint presentation only, the video clips that were presented, as well as other videos, and other educational materials. We will be adding other items throughout the process.

Individual property evaluations

After the snow melts, Firewise committee members will be available to assist in evaluating your home and provide suggestions for you to create a Firewise property through defensible space and practical home-hardening measures. Reply to this email (mesacortinafirewise@gmail.com) if you are interested in an evaluation, or helping on the Work Day. Please also send the number of hours you work on your property to this email.

The first year of the Mesa Cortina Firewise action plan includes:

- Community education
- Neighbors working on the first 5 feet of defensible space on our properties



- Marking your calendar to help on our volunteer work day on July 12; agreeing to work on your property and/or to assist neighbors in need in creating defensible space
- Obtaining an evaluation of your property, including recommended actions to make the home more ignition resistant and to improve defensible space
- Assisting individual homeowners in applying for a 50% grant for arborist work needed on each property. All the properties will be included in one Work Order in one grant application due by November 2025, for work to be done in 2026.

We are also happy to report that the Cortina Ridge HOA will be joining us in the effort to become a Firewise neighborhood.

Thank you from the Mesa Cortina HOA and the Firewise committee,

Rick Pratt and Judi Casey Firewise co-chairs