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## **Firewise Program: Framework for Action**

### **What is Firewise?**

- The Firewise USA® Program, developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), encourages local solutions for safety by involving homeowners in taking individual responsibility for preparing their homes and properties for the risk of wildfire.
- The program provides resources to help homeowners learn how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together to take action now to prevent losses. The program is education-focused.
- Educates neighbors and communities on the importance of defensible space, home hardening, and forest stewardship.
- Gives homeowners the potential to receive up to a 15% discount on homeowners insurance\*
- Firewise communities can qualify for grant funding for mitigation activities.

### **How to Participate?**

- To start a Firewise community, you need at least 8 residents.
- You must work with your committee to stay on track with your 3-year action plan.
- You must document at least 1 hour of work per year on your property to stay a part of the community. This document needs to be turned in to your committee.
- You are encouraged to attend 1 community gathering every year with a local agency educating your community on the importance of defensible space, home hardening, first aid, evacuation plans, risk of wildfire, or other educational options.

### **What is a Committee?**

- Anyone within the Firewise community can be a part of the committee, it is voluntary.
- Designate a Community Lead or Co-Leads. Individual(s) will be the primary point of contact for Sierra RCD, Cal FIRE, and the NFPA.
- The Committee will establish a community boundary map\*.

• \*Not all Insurances offer a Firewise discount. Use the QR code above to find out more.

• <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>

• SRCD may be able to help you establish your boundary map.

- The committee will complete a community risk assessment based on recommendations from Cal FIRE.
- The committee will create a 3-year action plan and make sure it is followed through to completion.
- The committee will log community hours and investments.
- The committee can collaborate and partner with SRCD and other agencies to develop possible projects that make your community more fire-safe.
- The committee will identify areas of improvement within the community and direct those needs to future action plans.

### **What needs to be completed to become a Firewise community?**

- The free NFPA application- linked at the bottom of the page.
- Community Risk Assessment.
- Boundary map.
- 3-year action plan.

### **What is a Boundary Map?**

- This map will show the boundaries of your community and every dwelling unit included will be a part of the Firewise Community.
- Should have a north star, a legend, and be geo-referenced to show the topography and geological features of the area.
- The SRCD would be happy to assist you with this part of your application.

### **What is the Community Risk Assessment?**

- The Community Risk Assessment is conducted in partnership with Cal FIRE.
- Throughout the assessment, the Lead/Committee Members will accompany Cal FIRE as they survey the community. Together, they will pinpoint concerns, hazards, and risks.
- Following the recommendations given by Cal FIRE during the assessment, the Committee/Lead will finalize the Community Risk Assessment.
- The initial assessment conducted with Cal FIRE evaluates the community as a whole, not individual residences or parcels.

### **What is the Action Plan?**

- The 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.
- These can include communitywide investments along with suggested homeowner actions and education activities that participants will strive to complete annually, or over a period of multiple years.
- Focuses on defensible space, home hardening, evacuation planning, and education.

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