

Why Should We Join the Firewise USA® Program?

Here's what these community members and professionals have to say about the value of Firewise USA®:



Bill Rebovich, Homeowner in the Firewise USA® Site, Colorado: "We helped [the firefighters] save our neighborhood and that was a big compliment to us to hear the fire professionals say, 'You did a great job here!'"

Fire Chief Brandon Shirley, South Carolina: "The homeowner plays a vital role when it comes to fire mitigation around their home because they are the first line of defense."

Kent Nelson, Maine Forest Service: "We emphasize that the homeowner should participate in a community-type program like Firewise USA® and that way they work together and they make their whole community safer not just their own house."

Joyce Statz, Resident in Firewise USA® site, Texas: "Sometimes neighbors have a feeling of helplessness with respect to wildfire because they

see the videos where there is a big wall of flame crushing communities, but we explain to them that is not how it works. Eighty percent of the losses from wildfire are from the embers and that's the thing that we can deal with."

Visit firewise.org to:

- ▶ Find tools to organize your community
- ▶ Download and share research fact sheets on wildfire and home construction
- ▶ Hear from other residents about importance of work at the home and community level
- ▶ Learn the basics of wildfire and what actions to take around your homes

This publication was produced in cooperation with: The National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®), the USDA Forest Service, the US Department of the Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters. Firewise USA® is a registered trademark of the National Fire Protection Association. NFPA is an equal opportunity employer. FWC95419



FIREWISE USA®
Residents Reducing Wildfire Risks

Taking Control of Your Wildfire Risk



firewise.org



What Is the Fire Problem?

Every year, devastating wildfires burn across the United States. At the same time, a growing number of people are living where wildfires are a real risk. While these fires will continue to happen, there are things you can do to protect your home and neighborhood as well as your family's safety.

NFPA® has found that in many cases of home destruction during wildfires, the homes were more flammable than the surrounding brush and trees. By taking action now, before a fire starts, you can increase your chances of having an ignition-resistant home and community.

What Can Be Done About It? Science and the Home Ignition Zone

Research shows that embers (burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried more than a mile through the wind) and small surface fires are the primary source of home ignitions during wildfires.

To make your home safer, you need to prepare it to withstand embers and keep flames or surface fire from touching the home or any attachments. You can do this by limiting the amount of flammable vegetation, choosing ignition-resistant building materials and construction techniques, and con-



ducting periodic outdoor maintenance within the three home ignition zones (HIZ).

The three zones are as follows:

Immediate Zone: the house and 0 to 5 feet around the house including the deck and attachments

Intermediate Zone: 5 to 30 feet from the house

Extended Zone: 30 to 100 feet from the house

Working with Neighbors

Home ignition zones often overlap onto adjacent properties. This makes the conditions of neighboring homes and vegetation a part of the wildfire threat. It's extremely important that neighbors work collaboratively with each other—and talk with each other—to reduce their shared risk.

Firewise USA® Program

Firewise USA® is a voluntary program that provides a framework to help neighbors get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community.

How Does the Program Work?

Organize it: Create a board or committee of volunteers to represent your community. They will work with partners such as local forestry agencies or the fire department to complete a wildfire risk assessment and present it to the community.

Plan it: The wildfire risk assessment should highlight recommendations for action. From this risk

assessment, the board will identify and prioritize action items for reducing ignition risk to homes. This action plan may span several years.

Do it: Host an outreach event and work with neighbors on addressing items in the action plan.

Tell us about it: New and renewal applications can be completed at portal.firewise.org. Tell us about the actions and efforts in your community to engage residents and complete mitigation work at the home level.