



Fall 2010



Firewise Communities®

“The How-To Newsletter”

This quarterly provides articles and helpful hints on how to incorporate Firewise principles.

THE FIREWISE COMMUNITY — *The Firewise Cycle: Synergy Among Stakeholders*

When it comes to protecting communities from wildfire, there are many players who have a stake in making sure that people, homes, property and the surrounding land are kept safe. When these parties can come together and act collectively, the results can be astounding and inspiring. There is no thing – and nothing – that can stand in their way.

Whether you are a firefighter (from a local fire department, most familiar in dealing with structural fires, or a wildland fire specialist facing down a raging wildfire), a homeowner, a property owner, an insurance agent, a developer, a landscape architect, a gardener or even a tenant renting a residence in the wildland/urban interface, you are one of these players and you can play a role in the ultimate success of your community’s Firewise efforts.

Though your motivations may be different, your ultimate goal is actually very similar – the safety of your community when faced with the threat of wildfire. The firefighter wants to be safer when facing fire events and wants homeowners and other residents to be Firewise; the homeowner wants to protect his/her home but may need guidance or assistance to put goals into action; and a local business may have use for resources, such as chips, slash or pine needles, resulting from Firewise activities or may be able to provide needed equipment for achieving a Firewise goal. By assessing what your own role may be, you can also identify who your collaborators could be. And then comes the outreach and teamwork. The benefits are many, with all parties winning. So, as you consider your Firewise plans for the coming year, remember to think beyond your own sphere to the other players with whom you can engage and support, leading to very satisfying results.



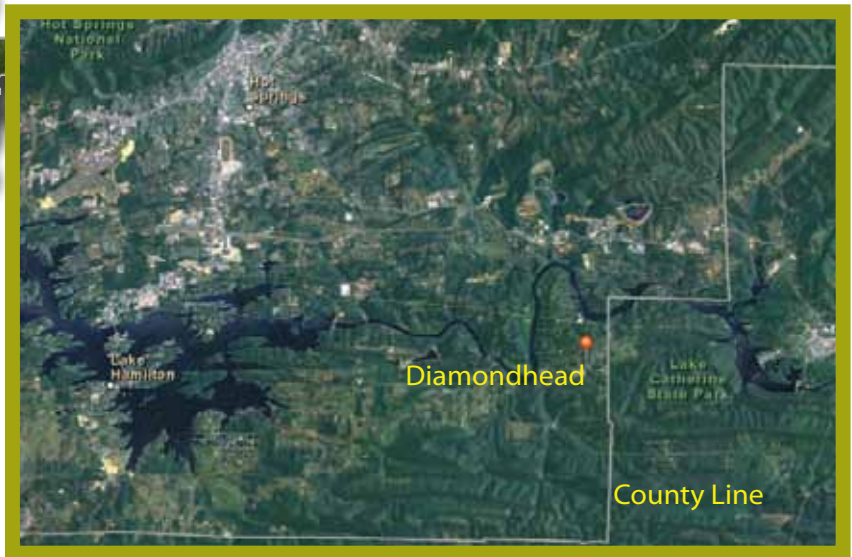
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THE FIREWISE COMMUNITY — EXAMPLE

DIAMONDHEAD, ARKANSAS CAPITALIZING ON COMMUNITY SYNERGY



The Diamondhead community is made up of more than 600 homes, providing haven to some 2,400 residents settled along the outskirts of the bustling Hot Springs area. Known as the spa city, Hot Springs creates a busy atmosphere for those that want to blend the beauty of a natural setting with the comforts of a metropolitan area. Lake Catherine sits just outside this Arkansas hot spot and is the backdrop around which the Diamondhead community was constructed. A subdivision of sorts, full of variations in homes, homeowners and organizations, its community members offer a broad spectrum of opinions, personalities and agendas. Five years ago, the Lake Hamilton Fire Department introduced the community to the Firewise program. It wasn't long before the program took on a presence of its own among residents.

As a result of the community's participation, Lake Hamilton Fire Department has recorded a 30 percent reduction in "out of control" burns. What's more, Firewise has provided a voice and a cause for homeowners to be directly involved with mitigation efforts. The positive impact of the community's synergistic work with its fire department has gone beyond Diamondhead, rippling out to Lake Catherine State Park (also a Firewise community), Camp Tanako (a nearby church camp), and the Hot Springs/Garland County area as a whole.

In fact, Firewise has become a safety program synonymous with the fire department and mitigation efforts in Diamondhead households across the lake. Its successful growth in the community is based on the fact that the local fire crew and homeowners, alike, took broad wildfire safety strategies and made them specific to the needs of the area.

Firewise principles are most successful when a group takes what the National Fire Protection Association has created and

inspired and focuses those principles on wildfire concerns that exist in their community and surrounding area. With the support of a largely retired population, a dedicated fire crew, and a nicely involved community, this Diamondhead Firewise program represents a superb example of true community ownership, leadership and inter-agency coordination.

Following are descriptions of some of the community groups who make the synergy possible in Diamondhead and the events and activities that constitute the community's inspiring Firewise efforts.

Diamondhead Lions Club — Each year, a fishing derby is hosted for special needs children. Lions Club members take this opportunity to involve local Arkansas Forestry Commission representatives, inviting Smokey Bear and providing as much Firewise safety literature and presentations as possible. The large crowd then visits Lake Catherine where sponsors work to make the day a fun community event for all. A turnout of just over 300 is normal for this excellent outreach effort, which also attracts dignitaries and media representatives from surrounding counties.

Diamondhead Community Church — The Men's Group works each year to apply Firewise safety strategies to Camp Tanako, a local church camp that serves more than 10,000 children annually. Through a spring clean up, the defensible space of each dormitory, worship center and activity area is maintained. This group also coordinates with local Arkansas Forestry Commission staff and the Lake Hamilton Fire Department to complete prescribed burns in the area surrounding the camp. Children return each summer to a lean, clean and green landscape at this lovely camp along the Lake Catherine shoreline. The defensible space immediately surrounding and indirectly protecting the area makes the lives of hundreds of children safer every year.

Diamondhead Beautification Committee — This committee follows Firewise strategies to maintain and develop flower beds, update landscaping surrounding central community buildings, and ensure that road right-of-ways are kept free of debris. Committee members are often seen at the Diamondhead entrance adding dirt and pruning vegetation to keep the main entry route to the area inviting and ultimately accessible. This group can be counted on to monitor areas that may become too thick or overgrown to be considered safe from wildfire. As access is a key piece to wildfire safety, it is obvious that beautification is not the only mission of this group of dedicated women and men.

Diamondhead Safety Committee — This committee has a unique relationship with the fire department, as they serve in the capacity of liaisons regarding anything relevant to emergency planning. The members of the committee ensure that evacuation routes and plans discussed in the community wildfire plan remain safe should they be needed. The Lake Hamilton crew relies on this committee to ensure that homes are properly marked with clear addresses, and most importantly, that escape routes, access, safety zones and landing areas are maintained to address the usual wear and tear of erosion, natural disasters, and human-caused change to the landscape.



Lake Hamilton Fire Department works with campers and volunteers at Camp Tanako on fire extinguisher tactics.

Property Owner's Association — For nearly five years, the Diamondhead Property Owner's Association (POA) has maintained a community burn pile, whereby a specific area is cleared away to serve as a common locale for community members to dump their mulch, lawn clippings, brush, and burnable trash and junk, free of charge. Through this novel approach, these materials are burned safely while being monitored closely by the POA and fire department. The solitary location of the community burn pile allows for maximum supervision of a single area, rather than the more dangerous burning of individual piles throughout the Diamondhead subdivision. Since burning debris was the highest cause of Arkansas wildfires in 2009, this burn pile provides a much-needed service to the community while also serving as an excellent prevention tool. In following strategies so critical to Firewise-style safety, this highly successful idea has eliminated a high-level wildfire hazard away from

residences and moved it to a safer, more controllable space.

Diamondhead Public Work Department — Another dimension to fire safety in Diamondhead is the maintenance of power-line right-of-ways and the clearance of road right-of ways. It offers yet another prevention mechanism for the community, since these cleared away areas serve as natural firebreaks. These existing breaks make the defensible space of each Diamondhead home that much more effective in the face of possible wildfire, where properties are so wooded and natural.



Smokey Bear visits the Diamondhead community.

While there is nothing particularly special about the community of Diamondhead, the combined efforts of its various individuals, groups, and organizations do something very special to protect homes and homeowners from the very real wildfire threat in Arkansas. The committees highlighted could sponsor any number of community efforts, yet they choose to support Firewise safety strategies and, in doing so, have seen tangible results in wildfire reduction and improvements to public safety. Whether influenced by the fire department, the local Arkansas



Forestry Commission staff, the historic wildfire presence in the area, or their proximity to Hot Springs, it is clear that the area's residents are conscientious of mitigation needs and the impact that prevention can have on possible emergency situa-

tions in the future. Within the Firewise Communities/USA program, Diamondhead and the Lake Hamilton Fire Department exemplify an excellence in teamwork of which Arkansas can be proud.

How-To thanks Adriane Harrell and Matthew Simpson of the Arkansas Forestry Commission for contributing the information and photographs for this Community Example.

Around the Firewise Home

Green Waste from Yard Cleanups — What to Do?

Autumn is one of those times when you break out the rakes and the clippers, the hedge trimmers and the hacksaws. You clear the downed limbs, trim and treat the broken ones, and rake the fallen leaves and pine needles. You climb up to roof level and clear the gutter and rooftop of any debris, especially those that could offer easy ignition during an approaching wildfire. Maybe your community even brings in a chipper to help break down the bigger tree limbs and cuttings. Whatever your fall cleanup



involves, the end result is a sizeable pile of yard waste. And the question for many is: What's the best way to deal with this green waste that's good for my pocketbook, my community, and the environment.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), yard trimmings and food residuals together constitute 26 percent of the U.S. municipal solid waste stream.

That's a considerable load to send to landfills, where green waste can become an environmental liability in the form of methane gas – which, if not properly captured, becomes the potent greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming.

You might counter, "Well, we can always just burn the debris." And while that's an easy, economical option used by many living in rural areas, burning leaves and other yard waste is not the

most environmental or healthful solution. It can cause air pollution and lead to uncontrolled fires when not overseen properly. And for people with asthma, allergies, chronic bronchitis and other lung ailments, it can make breathing difficult. Some states ban leaf burning, and some communities may ban or restrict the activity or where it can be done. If using this option, be sure to know what your community or state permits.

A safe, economical solution for dealing with green waste, which individuals, communities and municipalities all can adopt, is composting – which is the decomposition of plant remains and other once-living material to make a dark, crumbly, earthy substance that can be used to enrich garden soil. It also can help to vastly reduce the waste disposed of in landfills.



Among its other benefits, composting can help clean contaminated soil, prevent pollution and reduce the need for water, fertilizers and pesticides. There is a broad range of information available online to help you get started, as well as companies that specialize in green waste disposal. Visit the following websites for some useful information about composting and how you can get started at your own home or in your own community:

www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/composting/index.htm

www.vegweb.com/composting

www.HowToCompost.org

Information for this article was found at the above websites. **How-To** thanks the EPA, vegweb.com and HowToCompost.org for their helpful resources.

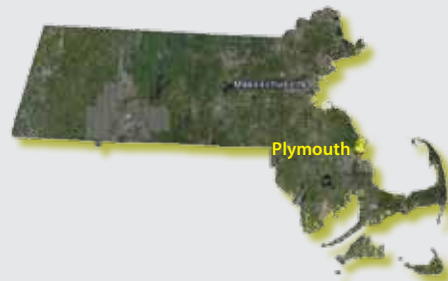
How-To Shout Out

How-To gives a shout out to Massachusetts State Forestry for its efforts to get the Commonwealth to adopt Firewise® standards, particularly in fire-prone regions.

To learn more, read:

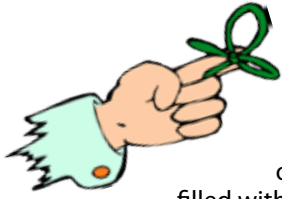
<http://www.wickedlocal.com/plymouth/news/x1876471510/State-asks-planners-to-adopt-Firewise-standards>

Do you know of a state, region or community whose efforts deserve special recognition? Write Michele Steinberg at msteinberg@nfpa.org and share your story.



Around the Firewise Home (Continued)

Helpful Reminders on Facilitating a Firewise Community USA ... Where You Live



As with individuals, communities are unique. Even in areas with similar natural fuels and housing layouts, the dynamics of the residents are different; no one pattern fits all. Communities are filled with individuals with varying leadership qualities, interest in fire prevention, volunteer ethic, and sense of neighborhood awareness. Complacency and apathy quite often need to be overcome.

Even though the overall process of reaching a Firewise Community nomination is ongoing, the real challenge is making the process mesh with the dynamics of your specific community. Some communities require much hand-holding, others less, and still others might never agree, for whatever reasons, to apply for Firewise recognition. Even in this worst-case scenario there is something to be gained because, at the very least, you can leave the community with a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

To facilitate the process, leading to a positive outcome, it can be helpful to keep the following actions in mind:

- Select a community that has at least a moderate wildfire risk, preferably one that has experienced a recent wildfire event.
- Identify the Firewise “sparkplug,” an individual who holds a passion for the community, has an appreciation for fire protection, and has the respect of the neighborhood. This is usually the most important and challenging task. Once you’ve found your sparkplug, she/he can help with organizing your community’s Firewise Committee.
- Engage the local fire department; these individuals usually know the area’s dynamics.
- Work with the homeowner or neighborhood association; they will know the local residents, local politics, and what makes the community tick.
- Involve partners such as a civic club, conservation group, or any association that has something in common with the residents-at-large.
- Conduct a hazard assessment that is completed by individuals with knowledge of wildland fire behavior and who may have received wildland/urban interface training. Then devise a mitigation plan completed with collaboration, at a minimum, of representatives from a forestry agency, a local governing body, and the local fire service. The mitigation plan must prioritize hazard mitigation treatments and also address means of reducing structural ignitability that could be caused by wildfire.
- Gain approval of the plan from the Firewise committee, which must be willing to invest a minimum of \$2 per capita on Firewise efforts. This cost can be in-kind contributions, volunteer service work, or equipment used toward fire-proofing the community.
- Offer suggestions about ways to make Firewise Day meaningful and fun – with an emphasis on fun.
- Assist the committee with the nomination form and other on-line **resources**.

How-To thanks Stanley Anderson, of the Alabama Forestry Commission, for providing the information for this important reminder.

How-To Chat with Dave Nuss



In this issue of the How-To Newsletter, Dave Nuss, Division Manager of NFPA's Wildland Fire Operations Division discusses how the division can best serve members of the wildland/urban interface, as well as how cooperative efforts among residents, firefighters, and other stakeholders can be employed to benefit the community in preparing for and facing threats from wildfire. Nuss was named the Wildland Fire Protection Division Manager in February. In this role he manages all of NFPA's wildland fire activities, including the Firewise Communities program, and he will expand NFPA's role in national and international wildfire partnerships. He also will oversee NFPA's wildfire codes and standards for public safety, coordinate a new advisory board of federal, state and non-profit representatives and expand wildfire safety and training opportunities for fire service professionals. Prior to his promotion, Nuss had served the NFPA's Denver Region, providing support and outreach in a 10 state region to NFPA members, fire service professionals, code officials, and other health and safety advocates. A career firefighter, he progressed through the ranks to deputy chief and has more than 22 years of service in Colorado and Oregon. As a firefighter, he served on various state and national committees regarding technical fire code development and public education and outreach. He is a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.

H-T: *What do you see as the most important wildfire safety issues NFPA can address?*

DN: I feel NFPA has long been the leader in delivering safety messages that target specific issues and work effectively in changing people's behavior when it comes to reducing or reacting to factors that can save their lives. The key to reducing the losses from wildfire is getting home and property owners to understand the role fire plays in their environment and what steps they need to take to mitigate the potential impact of that inevitable process on their homes. NFPA is well positioned with the Firewise program to deliver that message.

H-T: *Why did NFPA create a Wildland Fire Operations Division?*

DN: Losses from wildfire and the costs associated with protection and control are increasing substantially. At the same time, development of homes in the WUI is ever-increasing while fire conditions seem to be worsening due to climatic conditions and policies of the past. It appears things will only get worse. As the premier fire-safety source, NFPA recognizes the need to take definitive action. The Division was created with the idea that an effective strategy to reduce losses requires a multi-prong approach. The Division provides NFPA the opportunity to identify a variety of programs and partnerships to address the issue.

H-T: *How does the new Division support Firewise?*

DN: Firewise has always been, and will continue to be, NFPA's key program for addressing wildfire losses. Our experience with Firewise shows there are tangent issues related to the principles outlined in Firewise that may need additional effort. These might include hazard assessment training, other channels of communication to reach different audiences, or more direct on-the-ground support to communities. Through NFPA's broader outreach and funding, we can make Firewise more effective and encourage its implementation in a greater number of communities. Firewise will continue to be the cornerstone of NFPA's wildfire outreach and advocacy.

H-T: *What is the most remarkable outcome you've seen arising from the Firewise effort?*

DN: I am continually impressed with the broad reach that Firewise brings to a community. That has been its key to success.

It does take all interests in a community; homeowners, emergency responders, elected officials, industry and allied organizations, to have the necessary effect. With Firewise we have hundreds of examples of collaborations that have taken place to make a community safer. It continually proves itself as an effective, grassroots, bottom-up, inclusive community process that really makes a positive difference.

H-T: *What do you think is the greatest challenge to getting more communities and other stakeholders involved in Firewise?*

DN: Continued resourcing of a voluntary program such as Firewise is always a challenge. State and local coordinators are stretched thin, community volunteers are busy, funding resources are drying up, and homeowners have less time and opportunity to take on-going responsibility for their property. All these factors hamper our ability to initiate and sustain Firewise in many areas. And a large number of people who live in the WUI just don't understand and recognize the risk they live with, and the simple and inexpensive things they can do to have a positive impact. But those challenges also represent opportunities, and organizations like NFPA and those we partner with will need to get creative in assisting with overcoming those challenges. I'm optimistic because I see greater recognition at the federal and state levels that there really is a problem that needs to be addressed and that is at risk for increasing.

H-T: *What are the two or three key things you've learned in your first 6 months as Division Director?*

DN: I am probably preaching to the choir here, but one thing that has been so evident in my first six months is the level of dedication and energy of the Firewise staff (Michele Steinberg, Cheryl Blake, and Linda Coyle). They are passionate about what they do and will go out of their way to assist the effort whenever and wherever they can. Just as obvious is the energy of so many of the community leaders we work with. Their dedication is amazing and I suspect they truly are the unsung heroes in their neighborhoods. Finally, I see the quality of the Firewise program and materials and how that helps with the overall implementation and effectiveness of the program.

FIREWISE BY THE NUMBERS

The saying "The more, the merrier," is certainly applicable to Firewise Communities/USA®. Only with Firewise, it also means greater awareness and safety for your home and community. We're delighted to report that there are now 39 states with active Firewise communities, as Nevada has two new communities recognized. The more Firewise Communities/USA there are, the more of you there are who will be preparing to prevent fire from reaching your homes and property.

Since the Summer issue of "*How-To*", 32 new communities received recognition status, for a total of 599 communities with Firewise status. *How-To Newsletter* is pleased to welcome the following communities:

Arkansas – Bethel Heights, Holland, Nebco, Rogers, Scottsville, Walnut Grove
Arizona – Sunset Vista Estates
California – Graeagle
Florida – Great Outdoors RV Nature & Golf Resort, Seven Lakes Association, Westgate
Idaho – Avery, Warm Springs Mesa
Kentucky – Evona
Montana – Libby
Nevada – Crescent Valley/Beowawe, Eureka/Diamond Valley – *Nevada's first Firewise Communities/USA sites!*
Oklahoma – Ravia, Skiatook, Tishomingo
South Carolina – Pine Creek, Walker Woods
Tennessee – Leadmine Bend
Texas – Canyon Ridge Springs, Council Creek South, Stephen F. Austin State University
Washington – Forest Ridge, Gull Cove
Wisconsin – Arrowhead North, Arrowhead Pinehurst, Arrowhead Pines Course, Lake Sherwood, Potawatomi Estates

If your community or you know of a community that is thinking about becoming a Recognized Firewise Communities/USA®, please visit www.firewise.org. Remember, you can contact your state forest service liaison for assistance; he or she is an excellent resource for guidance in formulating your plan and offering activities that can energize your community or visit the Firewise web site for more information. To help jump start the process, you may want to download a copy of, "A User Reference Guide to the Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program" at <http://www.firewise.org/files/FirewiseUserGuide.pdf> or order a copy at no charge from the Firewise online catalog at <http://www.firewise.org/catalog/index.htm>.

Q & A Continued From Page 6

How-To Chat with Dave Nuss

H-T: *What are some goals you hope the Wildland Fire Operations Division can achieve that will expand synergy among and within Firewise communities?*

DN: We need to find ways for communities to share "best practices" with each other. That may be through something like the Backyards and Beyond conference, through a re-design of the Firewise and NFPA websites, or through some other mechanism. We need to take a close look at the messages we are conveying to make sure they are the most effective for helping people understand the risk they face and what they can do to minimize it. We need to ask the users of the program for their ideas to improve the program and how best to implement and sustain it. And we need to find ways to assist with funding so that it doesn't become the reason communities cannot fully participate in Firewise.

2010 Renewals

Don't wait until December 31!

In addition to the many communities joining us this year, our previously recognized communities must renew their status. Make sure you keep your community's status as a recognized Firewise Communities/USA up-to-date by letting us know about your Firewise Day and your volunteer action.

Once your community has held its Firewise Day, you can report your activity online at <http://www.firewise.org/usa>. Click on "Application and Renewal" and then on the "Fill Out the Online Form" button. You'll enter your name and password there. Be sure to provide all information for a timely renewal.

Need assistance? We are here to help you. Contact Michele Steinberg at msteinberg@nfpa.org or call 1-617-984-7487.

THE FIREWISE LEADER

The Value of Partnerships

Whether your community is a newcomer to Firewise or has long-time association, there are numerous avenues for creating synergy with your stakeholders. One incentive that has boosted the synergy for a number of Firewise communities nationwide is grants. While NFPA's Firewise program is not set up to provide grants, there are opportunities available through federal and state agency grant programs to use funds to conduct wildfire mitigation activities in communities.

For example, in Oklahoma, the Forestry Service only began promoting Firewise among its rural fire coordinators earlier this year, to complement its long history of providing technical



advice and assistance to communities. In particular, the Forestry Service had its rural fire coordinators share information about Firewise grant opportunities. The response, according to Oklahoma state liaison Kelly Hurt, was overwhelming.

"In short order, the number of Oklahoma communities participating in the Firewise program jumped to approximately 50," said Hurt. "In fact, the response was so great that Oklahoma's entire grant funding for new communities was expended."

Additionally, Oklahoma's offering of wildfire risk reduction grants, only available to Firewise communities, has served as further incentive for communities to join the Firewise program and develop practical Firewise mitigation projects.

Hurt noted, "Our fire departments are providing a great deal of community leadership to initiate Firewise projects. The offer of a grant that proactively addresses problem areas, such as invasive cedars, is very appealing to the state's communities. And, this grant encourages them to put thought and effort into the plan so that they can then make the real, on-the-ground changes that will save lives and protect property."

He concluded, "Overall, the leveraging of pre-existing forestry outreach programs and coupling of the risk reduction grant to the planning grant created unexpected synergies for us, in Oklahoma. These included our communication of the Firewise message, completion of Firewise projects, and a mobilization of communities, as well as enhancement of their sustainability and project quality."

Meanwhile, in Alabama, Firewise activities – originally begun in the early 2000s – had stalled. The state's first community to receive Firewise Community USA recognition status did not re-certify and little progress had been made in other communities, according to Stanley Anderson, of the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Things changed, though, when a grant opportunity came along that would assist a woodland subdivision with installing wildfire protection measures as a demonstration project. "This led to the community submitting a nomination to become a Firewise Community/USA, noted Anderson, "and this community has successfully re-certified every year since."

Then, in 2007, the Alabama Forestry Commission was successful in earning a re-design grant from the USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forests, to fund a three-year Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Project, through which the forestry commission would provide financial assistance to homeowners and communities in high wildfire-risk areas toward becoming Firewise. Participating communities were required to employ hazardous fuel mitigation treatments and perform all the necessary steps for submitting a nomination as a recognized Firewise Communities/USA site. As a result, four communities have received recognition status.

While outside of these grants, Anderson noted that Alabama has four more communities that are getting very close to meeting the requirements for nomination to attain Firewise recognition status, he enumerated the benefits that the grants offered those communities that used them to achieve their Firewise status. "The grants provided communities at risk of wildfire damages with between \$10,000 and \$25,000, depending on the scope of the project. They also proved to be a useful tool for encouraging and implementing hazardous mitigation treatments such as brush cutting in areas adjacent to structures and other values at risk, carrying out prescribed burning, and increasing defensible space around structures, as well as installing firebreaks and establishing emergency ingress/egress corridors."

In turn, the communities matched the grant amount with services, in-kind funding, or volunteer use of labor and equipment. And the end result was four more communities making Firewise practices a part of their mitigation efforts.

To learn about grants that could benefit your Firewise efforts, contact your state liaison, or visit http://www.firewise.org/usa/grant_funding_sources.htm.

How-To thanks Kelly Hurt, Oklahoma state liaison, and Stanley Anderson, of the Alabama Forestry Commission, for information they contributed for the writing of this Firewise Leader.

Editor's Note: *If your community has a story or unique activity that may benefit other communities, we encourage you to share it with us. It may very well benefit other communities or help a community get started with the Firewise Communities/USA process. Submit your description and photos to Michele Steinberg at: msteinberg@nfpa.org.*

YOUTH CORNER

Youth's Winning Poster Becomes a Firewise Mural

In 2008, the Alaska Division of Forestry held a poster contest in conjunction with their Firewise Education and Outreach Program. The poster contest, the ceramic mural and the Firewise Team were made possible by a Western States Fire Assistance competitive grant provided by the U.S. Forest Service to the Alaska Division of Forestry with matching funds provided by the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the Alaska Division of Forestry.

The following article is reprinted from the HOMER TRIBUNE, authored by Naomi Klouda.

Meg Ciccirella, Kenai Peninsula Firewise Team Leader, shows how a mural going up at the Homer Fire Department will look when complete and discusses it with Arts Committee member Gaye Wolfe. It is based on a winning poster entry by Maggie LaRue, with tile pieces created by art students at the Kenai Peninsula College.



Original artwork by Maggie LaRue.

signed by Professor Joy Fall's ceramic students at KPC.

"It was divided into sections, and each student made a portion of the mural," Ciccirella explained. "That's why you'll see the tiles are not square, not flat, but multi-dimensional."

The tiles were brought down to Homer in May-June, as Ciccirella worked with local contractor Gary Kulesza of Burning Daylight Construction to help figure out the framing and a roof shelter. Angie Newby, director of the Homer Public Arts Advisory Commission, helped select the public installation. Ciccirella said the drawing illustrates an important set of precautions.

"A lot of people in Homer might not see themselves as living in the woods, but they do live in a rural setting surrounded by forest," she said. "We have to take precautions to keep our property safe and partner with wildland firefighters."

Since last year's significant fire at Mile 17 on East End Road, experts have been asking Homer residents to work to remove firewood away from the home, and clear out dead brush and trees in order to be more "Firewise."



Homer student Maggie LaRue's Firewise poster may have only started out in crayon, but it went a long way toward winning the hearts of judges in a 2008 Firewise awareness contest.

Now, two years later, Maggie's drawing is being recreated in tile by Kenai Peninsula College art students, and will be installed at the Homer Fire Department as a permanent message about how to be safe from fires.

"This is a gift to the City of Homer, paid for by the Division of Forestry," said Gaye Wolfe, member of the Homer Public Arts Advisory Commission. When finished, the ceramic mural will be visible from several vantage points; a vivid depiction of a home in the woods framed, then further outlined in colorful ceramic pieces.

"It's a work in progress," said Meg Ciccirella, the Kenai Peninsula Firewise Team leader. "It all began with a poster contest conducted across the peninsula by the Division of Forestry, in conjunction with the Firewise Education and Outreach Program."

The winning entry was designed by the daughter of Bonnie and Blake LaRue, when she was 11 years old. From there, her poster was used as a basis for a mural developed, sculpted and de-



(For additional information about the mural, see page 11, Web Sources for Meg Ciccirella's email address.)

FIREWISE RESOURCES

Engaging Fellow Firewise Friends

As you make your own efforts and engage with other like-minded communities, you will find there are many ways to go about pursuing and renewing Firewise status. A useful way to share your successes and learn from those of others is to join MyFirewise – the networking site for communities living in the wildland/urban interface. During August, MyFirewise reached a milestone, with its membership up to 615. To sign up, visit <http://network.firewise.org>. If you're a Facebook user, you can become a fan of the Firewise page there (www.facebook.com/Firewise) and connect with even more Firewise friends. You can also follow Michele Steinberg for Firewise tweets at <http://twitter.com/Firewise>, where you can keep abreast of all kinds of Firewise-related news and information.



Reading Up

Smart Yard Care: Big Rewards from Small Investments in Stewardship is a new handbook that takes a holistic look at Firewise practices. For example, burning debris is a major cause of unwanted wildfires. As much fun as torching dried leaves and branches can be, there are some environmentally friendly alternatives. Thoughtful homeowners, especially those in Mid-Atlantic states, will find good information to help reduce, reuse or recycle yard waste. This also may help decrease unwanted fire starts. In addition, the handbook also provides useful tips on dealing with invasive species and living with wildlife, as well as protecting your homes and landscapes from wildfire. To purchase copies of the book, go to <http://www.hort.vt.edu/mastergardener/smartyardstorefront.html>. Single copies are \$20 each; cartons of 50 are \$600. The handbook was produced with National Fire Plan funds through a partnership of the National Park Service and the Virginia Cooperative Extension. For more information, e-mail Barb_Stewart@nps.gov.



For additional information on wildfire and Firewise articles, visit the Firewise Article Archive at www.Firewise.org/library/index.php. You'll have access to countless Firewise articles at the click of your mouse!

Have you had a chance to visit the new Firewise Catalog?

The Firewise catalog has a new look, new feel and now it's easier to navigate. This summer the Firewise catalog was moved to NFPA's website, www.nfpa.org. But you can still get there if you are visiting the Firewise website www.firewise.org. Click on the catalog tab and then click on "click here"; you will automatically be redirected to the new catalog. Once there, just click on *Firewise®: Wildfire Safety* in the left hand column and the print and audiovisual materials that you have always ordered will appear. You still won't be charged for the product, nor the shipping. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either Linda Coyle at lcoyle@nfpa.org or Cheryl Blake at cblake@nfpa.org.



Web Sources

To access information addressed in this issue of *How-To Newsletter*, visit the following websites:

- MyFirewise — <http://network.firewise.org>
- Firewise on Twitter — <http://twitter.com/Firewise>
- Firewise on Facebook — www.facebook.com/Firewise
- Additional tips courtesy of Alabama Forestry Commission — http://www.forestry.alabama.gov/PDFs/50_Ways_to_Protect_Your_home.pdf
http://www.forestry.alabama.gov/PDFs/Five_Ways_to_Protect_Your_Forestland_from_Wildfire.pdf
- Smart Yard Care: *Big Rewards from Small Investments in Stewardship* — <http://www.hort.vt.edu/mastergardener/smartyardstorefront.html>
- Environmental Protection Agency (tips on composting) — <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/composting/index.htm>
- More Composting Information— www.vegweb.com/composting and HowToCompost.org
- Information on Firewise grants and resources — http://www.firewise.org/usa/grant_funding_sources.htm
- Maggie's Mural – If you have an interest in the process of what it took to go from the paper drawing to a plan for tile-making, hand-carved tiles vs. pre-manufactured, working with the tile contractors and the college, approaching city officials, and other aspects of this incredible project please feel free to contact Meg Cicciarella at kpb.firewise.meg@gmail.com. Meg will be more than happy to share the ins and outs of this project.



NFPA Offers Newly Revised Home Ignition Zone course

NFPA is offering the *Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone* two-day workshop this fall at four locations:

October 25-26

Holiday Inn Denver
3333 Quebec Street
Denver, CO
303-321-3500

November 8-9

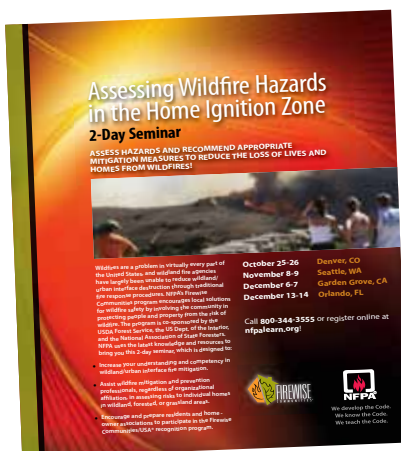
Silver Cloud
1046 First Avenue
Seattle, WA
206-204-9800

December 6-7

Crowne Plaza Anaheim Resort
12021 Harbor Blvd
Garden Grove, CA
714-867-5555

December 13-14

Doubletree Orlando Resort Int'l
10100 International Drive
Orlando, FL
800-327-0363



The workshop will help you to identify hazards and reduce risks in the home ignition zone before a wildfire starts. Recent research has led to a greater understanding of how wildland fires ignite homes. By applying new knowledge of how wildland/urban interface fires occur and by using new approaches, future wildland/urban interface fire disasters can be significantly reduced.

This 2-day workshop is designed to (1) provide a basic understanding of fire behavior and structure ignition from wildfires, (2) increase an understanding and competency in wildland/urban interface fire mitigation, (3) provide an understanding of the risk assessment methods based on NFPA 1144: *Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire*, (4) identify corrective mitigation measures for the resident to implement to reduce the risk of ignition, and (5) provide an understanding of safety measures for new construction and community design, based on NFPA 1141: *Standard for Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Suburban and Rural Areas*.

To find out about seminar sessions or to register, visit www.nfpalearn.org or call 1-800-344-3555.