



Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

Next Steps to Becoming Fire-Adapted

No. CR-2014-6 April 23, 2014

Learning Objective: The student will be able to identify information about prewildfire risk-reduction efforts and other preparedness resources.

Homeowners, firefighters, emergency responders, land managers and community leaders all have an important role in preparing their community for the next wildfire. Each area of the country has different landscapes, seasons and other factors that influence wildfires. Homes, businesses, parks, forests, utilities, municipal water supplies and other community assets are all vulnerable to wildfire.

Start With Your Home: Doing little things can make a big difference. Trees, shrubs and other vegetation surrounding your home play a big role in how well your house survives a wildfire. Reduce your risk by making smart landscaping decisions and maintaining your property. A free downloadable wildfire risk assessment and checklist can assist in identifying your home's vulnerability to embers and flames and offer effective affordable solutions. Wildfire embers can travel over 1 mile; control what happens when they land.

Make Sure You Have an Emergency Preparedness Plan: Know what to do and where to go before poor visibility, smoke and flames cause panic and confusion.

Talk With Your Fire Department: Learn what to expect from your local fire department before the next wildfire approaches your community. Does your fire department participate in the Ready, Set, Go! Program? The Ready, Set, Go! Program is a preparedness program that works with citizens to ensure that everyone is ready for the next wildfire. This three-step process allows firefighters to teach homeowners how to create their own action plan, which includes getting their property wildfire ready before a fire threatens, getting set to leave their home, and understanding the role of evacuation in the community. The simple steps of the program are:

- **Ready — Be Ready, Be Firewise:** Take personal responsibility, and prepare long before the threat of a wildland fire so that your home is ready in case of fire. Create defensible space by clearing brush away from your home. Use fire-resistant landscaping, and harden your home with fire-safe construction measures. Assemble emergency supplies and belongings and put in a safe place. Plan escape routes, and make sure all those residing within the home know the plan of action.
- **Set — Situational Awareness:** Pack your vehicle with your emergency items. Stay aware of the latest news and information on the fire from local media, your local fire department, and public safety.
- **Go — Act Early!** Follow your personal wildland fire action plan. Doing so will not only support your safety, but will allow firefighters to best maneuver resources to combat the fire.

Make It a Community Approach: Learn the principles to improve your home's safety. Firefighters battle hundreds of wildfires every year, but they can't do it alone and can't be everywhere. Programs such as Firewise Communities/USA teach you how to use home safety principles through:

- Simple steps to reduce wildfire fuel surrounding homes.
- Plant and building material guidance for in and around homes.
- Resources to help neighbors come together to make Firewise changes communitywide.

Additional Resources

- Fire-Adapted Communities: www.fireadapted.org.
- International Association of Fire Chiefs' Ready, Set, Go! Program: www.wildlandfirersg.org.
- National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program: www.firewise.org.



The Ready, Set, Go! and Firewise Programs are two mitigation programs available.

For archived downloads, go to:

www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/