

Coalition of Firewise Communities - NOTES

Tuesday Oct, 2019 – 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Our Mission: The coalition promotes fire safety through advocacy, education, and community involvement with other stakeholders interested in working toward stronger fire safety practices.

Welcome, introduce officers, announcements

Susan Rogers

5 minutes

- Who's here for the first time? Sign in to get on mailing list.
- Reminders –
 - Sign up for Code Red (see mynevadacounty.com – Wildfire Prep button, then bottom of that page under Helpful Links))
 - Complete requests for those shovel-ready projects, send to Fire Safe Council.
 - Promote the Fire Safe Council to your residents: \$49 membership, reflective address signs (\$35 single side, \$40, double, \$5 for stake)
 - Garage door openers - SB 969 is a law passed in California that requires all garage door openers in residential applications sold or installed in California on or after July 1st, 2019 to be equipped with battery backup.
 - If replacing garage door and/or the opener, do it with battery back up.
 - FWC Communications Survey - Who did not fill one out last month? Please turn in or leave on seat at end of meeting.
- 15 communities who are now funded to pay for Fire Scientist to do Hazard Assessment. FSC and County determines. Each Supervisor tries to get at least 1+ in their district. Dr. Joanne Fites-Kaufman, Fire Scientist, and Dario David, Forester, completes assessment.
 - List of Communities will be published on Coalition & FSC Website.
- Beware of Veg Clearing contractors – fear mongers. Scaring residents into doing more work than they need, and saying the resident will be fined if they don't do the work.

Common Findings learned from Hazard Assessments Dr. JoAnn Fites-Kaufman, Fire Scientist

20 minutes

Document Link: <https://sites.google.com/site/coalitionoffirewisecommunities/fire-safety-articles-videos>

1) Evacuation Preparedness Issues: roads, roads roads

- 10/15 minimum, not enough for fire safety. Reduce fuels so you don't have lethal heat going to road (burning evacuees and burning first responders).
- Surface and ladder fuels cleared, but can carry fire over road. Separate Crowns of Trees! See 4291.
- Insufficient pullout or too narrow area for pullout
- Lack of 2 or better 3 alt routes for community

- All of this is unsafe for evacuees and fire fighters, sheriffs, police, highway patrol
- Residents waiting for county to do the work. Critical to take your own action now.

2) Def Space Zones – 0-5, 5-30,30-100

- Joanne looks at the Defensible Space Zone from the point that the area is burning. Homes have highest concentrated fuels around it.
- 0-5 feet: 98% of homes have flammable material around this zone. Plants dry out & burn. Flammable mulch. NO PLANT MATERIAL. BARE DIRT, ROCK, PAVEMENT. NON-COMBUSTABLE MATERIALS ONLY.
- 0-30 feet. Heat & flames from 30-100 feet can easily reach homes and firefighters there. Start and work your way out. Clean up ground vegetation and crown separation.

3) Home Hardening

- Many older homes lack any hardening.
- 2-3 changes can change intrusion:
 - Improve vent covers (finer screen mesh or baffled metal covers)
 - Use metal window screen
 - Enclose under decks or houses (keep embers out)
 - Solid wood (ie plywood)
 - Non-flammable material
 - Cement board
 - Old metal pool siding or roofing material
 - Keep house free of litter on roof
 - Get rid of wood fences attached to house
 - Use metal fencing/gates that butt up against house

4) Unrealistic & Unsafe ideas of Temporary Refuge Areas or Shelter in place options

- Incident commander during a fire will make a determination during a fire. Paved parking lots, newer buildings (upgraded bldg. codes), grassy, sometimes green field, metal building (combustible components???), mine diggings (no trees???). River is not a good place to go (canyons are where convective super-heated gases go through this area).
- NEED SHELTER. Convective heat rises up and is particularly lethal to humans.
- **The Take-Away from 1-4 above: GET OUT EARLY. FIX ROADS.**

5) Another Issue: Un-Informed Careless visitors

- Majority of residents have 2nd homes, and rent to visitors who don't know about fires.
- High numbers of recreational or special event visitors. Adds to evacuees who don't know about fire.
- Illegal camp fires
- "Trimigrants" and others may not know about fire risks or don't care or have a hard living situation. Illegal fire starts, especially during fire season.

- 6) **How to get this funded** – work back 10+ feet for cleaning up roads: get “shovel ready” projects ready and submit to Jamie/FSC. Check list on Coalition Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/coalitionoffirewisecommunities/firewise/fire-safe-community-website-guidelines>

What to do before the power is turned off

Susan Rogers

- Generators produce CO2. Never in closed space.
- Keep at least 20 feet from house.
- See Jim Mathias’ presentation below.

Clarify defensible space on roads

Susan Rogers

5 minutes

- Trisha Tillotson made notes, Susan to update graphics. working on text version.

Ad hoc group to study Boulder CO FWC & Insurance

Susan Rogers

10 minutes

- Boulder CO working with insurance companies and Fire Wise Communities.

NFPA Fire Wise Community Paperwork to maintain NFPA Certification Jeff Peach 5 Min

- Report format on NFPA website - \$, time/hours, other scenarios of work completed for year on defensible space, public education/outreach on Fire Preparedness, vegetation removal.
- Jeff gets quarterly info from community, then goes on NFPA website to give annual report. November 15th, cut off for year.
- Coalition website: Print out report for ppl to fill out. One person collects info, tallies results and submits data on NFPA website. NFPA gives renewal certificate.
- Jamie accesses NFPA for roll up info and in-kind matching fund info for grants.

Report on Fire Safe Council Board meeting

Susan Rogers

5 minutes

- Early Warning Info: Weather info, Emergency Push Notifications, Staying Informed, Additional info – Instruction Sheet on how to sign up Coalition Website.
- Go to PGE (Public Safety Power Shut Off) AND National Weather Service (Red Flag Warning) to get these push notifications. Go to OES for CodeRED warnings.
- Written Inventory of Your Home – Link on Coalition Website. List and Video on your home.
- Rick Nolle: Only county can fine residents, not LWW.
- Jamie: new grant funding open. Firewise Coordinator probably next Spring 2020.
- DSA Visits: FSC 1190 DSA requests, completed 1100+ requests.

Subcommittee and Agency Partner Status Reports

- **Cal Fire** – Jim Mathias (generator fires, burn piles after end of fire season)
 - **Generator Safety:**
 - Link: <https://sites.google.com/site/coalitionoffirewisecommunities/fire-safety-articles-videos>

- Generator overheated plastic enclosure, 1 foot from house with leaves around generator – fire.
- Generator not maintained very well, caught on fire and burned home.
- No transfer switch to generator, power re-established when home owner heard a “pop.” Generator burned, all wires blown up by PGE.
- Hazards: shocks and electrocution if not wired correctly. Carbon monoxide, fires from improperly refueling a generator or inappropriately storing the fueled. Shut off and let it cool down BEFORE refueling. Annually maintained. Fuel Stabilizer. Noise and vibration hazards.
- **BURN PILES**
 - Coming up, pending rain.
 - Burn Permit 1st outside of GV, NCity and Truckee: Go to Cal-fire Station or on line: print out certificate, sign, turn in. <https://sites.google.com/site/coalitionoffirewisecommunities/fire-safety-articles-videos>
 - Make sure it’s a burn day: air district burn day status.
 - GV, Nev City & Truckee – get City Permit.
 - You can only burn what grows out of the ground. Can’t burn plywood/osb. Trash (plastic, cardboard, waste oil, clothing painted material. Can’t burn dimensional lumber of any kind. No piles of manily leaves and pine needles. Can’t burn in a burn barrel (too much smoke).
 - Safe burn piles (no garbage) during Permit time: No bigger than 4 feet in diameter and 4 feet high. 10 feet clearance all around it. After Cal-Fire resends burn permit time period, can have bigger fire (see Cal-Fire website). Attended by person 18 years or older. Min 5 gals water, garden hose and shovel.
- **County of Nevada – Jeff Pettit**
 - Public Safety Power ShutOffs
 - We’re not in the clear yet with weather and fire danger. Pay attention to weather, resources for more info.
 - Yuba River water problem – yellow plume.
 - High/Low Sirens in some Sheriff Patrol vehicles. It means to EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY.

Other Items from the Floor

1) Expanding firewise communities – some are growing. Get number in by Nov 15th. 41 In-Training Communities

**Next meeting: Nov 5th, 2019 -- 5:30 – 7:30 PM
336 Crown Point Circle**