

50 Ideas for ACTION



Community Education and Outreach

1. Establish a FireWise committee within your neighborhood to work collectively towards building a more fire resistant community.
2. Plan a regular community workday as a cheap and effective way to complete mitigation projects and build a sense of community around fire mitigation.
3. Host a neighborhood potluck or barbeque to introduce wildfire preparedness principles and develop a sense of community around a shared concern.
4. Use the months of April and May to introduce yourself to your local fire chief and/or fire department personnel (*the worst time to meet your local fire officials is during a wildfire*).
5. Build and distribute welcome packets to introduce new residents to the idea of fire mitigation. Make sure to include a welcome letter that introduces you as a FireWise Ambassador, a summary of actions the neighborhood has already taken, and what plans you have for the future.
6. Compile a phone tree or text group within your neighborhood to quickly and efficiently inform residents of any pressing information about fires or other emergency events.
7. Create a neighborhood email list to distribute FireWise information.
8. Distribute FireWise information found either from our monthly E-News or on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FireWiseSouthwestColorado/>
9. Invite neighbors on a tour highlighting exemplary defensible space, FireWise landscaping, fire resistant construction, and/or a community fuel break.
10. Talk to neighbors who might be elderly or disabled and discuss their evacuation plans and needs.
11. Ensure FireWise is a regular line item in any agenda for either HOA meetings or other neighborhood gatherings where information is presented.
12. Check with your County Chapter Coordinator to see if there are any grants currently available to your neighborhood for mitigation or education.
13. Apply for Firewise USA recognition program or renew your registration. The initial application and renewal application are both available here: <http://www.firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx?sso=0>.

Prevention

14. Post current fire conditions, red flag warnings, or other restrictions in a public place so residents are aware of the conditions of the day and can modify their burn plans appropriately.
15. Consider adopting neighborhood burn restrictions.
16. Maintain an existing fire danger sign.

Planning

17. To help get your community get engaged in mitigation, talk to you County Coordinator about developing a Community Assessment for your neighborhood that will provide recommendations for action.
18. Visit with your County Coordinator to see whether developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) makes sense for your community.
19. If you have an existing Community Assessment or CWPP, review it annually and update as needed. Follow this up by distributing updates to your neighbors and emergency responders.
20. Establish a Community Assessment or CWPP implementation team to ensure progress is being made on turning the recommendations into actions.
21. Seek funds to implement Community Assessment or CWPP recommendations.
22. Work with adjacent landowners to ensure there are multiple access routes in the event that the primary one is shut off in an emergency.
23. Work with adjacent landowners to plan and secure permission for community fuel breaks, access thinning or safe areas.
24. Work with your County Coordinator and public land management agencies like the Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, or Colorado State Forest Service to plan cross-boundary mitigation projects.

Risk Reduction

25. Sign up for a free home assessment at <http://southwestcoloradofires.org/take-action/> and ask your County Coordinator about the FireWise cost-share program.
26. Make sure your residents are aware of the CSFS Mitigation Contractor's List.
27. Publicize, in all ways possible, the Colorado State Forest Service defensible space suggestions available for download at: http://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/FIRE2012_1_DspaceQuickGuide.pdf
28. Plan an event to raise wildfire awareness or complete a project in your neighborhood the first Saturday in May which is national Community Wildfire Preparedness Day.
29. Mitigate communal areas so residents can see completed work and therefore are encouraged to work on their own homes and within their own property.
30. Establish a communal slash pile with a slash disposal mechanism (air curtain burner day, pile burn, tub grinder, etc.).
31. Organize a community curbside chipper day and take advantage of the Chipper Rental Rebate for communities (or individual homeowners). <http://southwestcoloradofires.org/homeowners/>
32. Encourage your HOA Board to create a line item for fire mitigation work.
33. Request a Friends of FireWise donation from your HOA/POA or neighbors. <http://southwestcoloradofires.org/become-a-friend-of-firewise-today/>
34. Share grants and programs that support fuel reduction on individual properties.
35. Mitigate land around evacuation route(s) and other roads so residents or first responders can safely move throughout the community during a wildfire.
36. Implement community fuel breaks, access thinning or safe areas.
37. IMPORTANT: If your neighborhood allows pile burning, make sure residents are aware of the need to get a burn permit (in La Plata County) from your local fire department and Inform the County Dispatch Center of all controlled burns prior

to burning. In Montezuma and Dolores counties calling the County Dispatch Center is the only requirement. Within Archuleta County, you are only required to get a burn permit if you are within Pagosa Fire Protection District but you should advise the local fire department regardless of where you live by calling dispatch.

38. Establish covenants within the HOA to require residents to maintain defensible space once it has been created.
39. Establish covenants within the HOA to recommend or require ignition resistant building materials to be used especially on roofs, siding, and decks.

Emergency Response

40. Do an inventory of your neighborhood street and home addressing signs. Encourage your neighbors to use reflective signs available (small fee) from the county or local fire department. Find ways to make signs more visible to emergency responders.
41. Invite fire department personnel to visit your neighborhood to assess driveways, turnouts, turn-arounds, etc. for emergency access.
42. Encourage residents to sign-up for your county's emergency notification system.
43. Share "Go Bag" list and encourage residents to create one that includes important medications, papers, personal items and priceless items so they are prepared to evacuate.
44. Work with your local fire department to establish an evacuation plan so residents can safely exit the community during a wildfire or other emergency event. Make all residents aware of the plan.
45. Work with your fire department, Sheriff's Office and Emergency Manager to plan a practice evacuation so residents clearly understand where and how to exit in the event of a fire.
46. Widely disperse evacuation preparedness information from American Red Cross and Colorado Ready.Gov.
http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_77_,00.html and
<https://www.readycolorado.com/>
47. Develop community water storage that can be used by firefighters in the event that they need another water source during a fire.
48. Create turnouts on one-lane roads so fire trucks and residents can use the road simultaneously.
49. Enlarge turnarounds and cul de sacs so that fire trucks can turn around easily. This ensures that firefighters or other first responders can safely move within your neighborhood.

And last, but not least:

50. **CELEBRATE** small and big successes alike - neighbors like to see success and be recognized for their efforts!