

## What are the Benefits of Being a Firewise Community?

Communities choose to become Firewise for many reasons. Communities whose residents work together have a greater chance of surviving a wildfire. Working with your neighbors creates greater protection, since the more homes within a community that adopt Firewise practices, the more effective the impact on reducing the threat of fire. It also helps grow community relationships with one another and local fire staff. Additionally, it can offer peace of mind, knowing that your community is prepared to survive a wildfire. But, most importantly, it reduces the chances of losing lives, property, and resources from fire.



## How Does a Community Become Firewise?

Becoming a Firewise Community can easily be accomplished in any neighborhood, subdivision, or small town. The basic requirements are:

- Work with a local wildland urban interface specialist to complete a community assessment and develop a plan that identifies wildland fire safety projects to be implemented by the community.
- Organize a local board or committee that leads and implements the Firewise Community/USA program and tracks its progress or status.
- Plan and hold a Firewise Communities/USA Day each year that is dedicated to a local Firewise project.
- Invest a minimum of \$2.00 per capita annually in local Firewise projects. Time and materials provided by volunteers and/or local fire staff can be included.
- Submit an annual report to Firewise Communities/USA that documents continuing compliance with the program.

## Becoming a Firewise Community, Step by Step

Becoming a Firewise Community begins with you. It will require some time and coordination, but little else to get the process started. You can follow these steps to become a Firewise Community:

- Contact your local Firewise Communities representative, Mark Billmire ([mark@mccallfire.com](mailto:mark@mccallfire.com)).
- Organize a site visit with your Firewise Communities representative and local fire officials so that the community can be assessed in terms of wildland fire safety.
- Recruit community members for a Firewise board or committee. This group will organize and manage Firewise community projects and activities.
- Hold a meeting of the board/committee and have the Firewise Communities Representative present the community assessment.

- Based on the assessment results, develop an action plan to address the wildfire threats in the community. The plan must be approved by the Firewise Communities Representative.
- Work with the community to implement the action plan. The first action item can be used for the community's first Firewise Day.
- Complete and submit the Firewise Communities/USA ( <http://www.firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx>). Submit the application to your Firewise Communities representative.
- Once you have been recognized as a Firewise Community, renew your status annually using the renewal form.