

Firewise workshop scheduled

On March 31, the University of California Cooperative Extension and the Plumas County Fire Safe Council will conduct a Firewise Workshop at the Peninsula Fire Station #2, for Lake Almanor Basin and Indian Valley community members.

The one-day workshop is made possible by a grant from the Bureau of Land Management, as part of the National Fire Plan.

Almanor basin and Indian Valley residents who would like to attend this workshop should contact Mike DeLasaux at 283-6125 for more information. The workshop capacity is limited to 25 participants, who must RSVP no later than March 25.

Local Firewise workshops are part of the National Fire Protection Association's nationwide effort to share what has been learned about the wildland/urban interface problem since it was identified in 1985, when 1,400 homes were lost to wildfire.

Local participants will work through state-of-the-art simulation and mapping exercises to learn firsthand of the complexities involved in creating communities and citizenries that are prepared for the inevitable effects of wildfire. Participants will learn about wildland/urban

interface fire hazards; designing fire-wise homes and landscaping; and incorporating Firewise strategies into existing and developing communities. Participants will better understand that it isn't always the flames directly adjacent to the structure that cause a home to be damaged or destroyed. It is often caused by the ember blizzard-tens of thousands of sparks that frequently travel up to a mile away when trees and brush explode in flame. It is predominately these embers, which land in receptive fuel beds such as shake roofs and pine needles or go through openings into an attic or under a deck, that threaten homes and communities. Actions taken by residents-can have dramatic effects on the potential property damage and loss from wildfires. According to research in southern California, homes with noncombustible roofs and at least 30 feet of defensible space have a survival rate of 85%. By increasing defensible space to 60 feet, the survival rate goes to 95%. Plumas County homes and structures are, and will continue to be at risk from wild-land fires. Many have experienced the threat from wild-land fires in the past, such as Mt Hough Complex fires (1999),

Horton Fire (1999), Storrie Fire (2000) and Stream Fire (2001).

For more information on general Firewise topics you can visit the Plumas County Fire Safe Council's Web site at www.plumasfire-safe.org.

Residents are also invited to attend the monthly County Fire Safe Council meetings, on the second Wednesday of each month at 9 am at the Quincy Fire Hall. Or contact Dale Knutsen (259-2287) for information on Almanor Basin Fire Safe Council meetings, which are held at the West Almanor Fire Hall.