

Fire Safe Council continues to encourage Firewise Consultations in Seven Communities

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council with a grant from the Plumas National Forest would like to remind residents in the communities of Bucks Lake, Meadow Valley, Greenhorn, Long Valley/Sloat, Grizzly Creek Road and the perimeters of Quincy and Plumas Eureka that they are offering free Firewise consultations to assist residents by assessing the risk of their home's loss or damage from a wildland fire. The fire departments in these seven communities requested participation in this grant project in cooperation with the County Fire Safe Council, for the benefit of residents in their fire protection district. Residents are encouraged to call by October 1, 2002. Next year, these consultations will be offered in the communities of Sierra Valley, Portola, C-Road, Graeagle, Indian Valley and the Peninsula of Lake Almanor.

If a resident chooses to have a firewise consultation, a trained consultant, who is usually a member from their fire department, will visit the home and assess the vulnerability of the structures to a wildland fire. The assessment considers residence access, roofing material, siding, windows, openings to attics and decks, adjacent hazards, and vegetation flammability both adjacent and up to 300 feet away from the home. Resident's will have an opportunity to discuss and better understand factors that contribute to a home's loss or damage from a wildfire. This consultation takes about one-half hour, and can be scheduled at your convenience.

Residents are reminded that it isn't always the flames directly adjacent to the structures that cause the home to be lost. It is often the ember blizzard, with tens of thousands of sparks, frequently traveling up to ¼ mile away when trees and brush explode in flame. It is these embers that land in receptive fuelbeds of shake roofs; needles or leaves on and around the structure; openings into an attic, or under a deck; that cause many homes to burn. Many homes that burn in a wildfire are lost from just a spark not the "wall of flames", and many homes burn before or after the main fire passes. We have been fortunate in the past, but we need to understand and take appropriate actions to prevent catastrophic losses in the future. It is not a question of if, but of when a wildland fire threatens lives and property in Plumas County.

For more information you can call 283-0829 or (800) 973-3320 to schedule a free consultation, or you can visit the Plumas County Fire Safe Council's web site at www.plumasfiresafe.org. County residents are also invited to become members and attend the monthly County Fire Safe Council meetings, on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 am at the Quincy Fire Hall.