

So, you want to make your community more fire safe – Here is how:

STEP 1 Contact the Plumas County Fire Safe Council to request assistance - An easy way to do this is to complete the Application for Service form located at: www.plumasfiresafe.org

STEP 2 Learn about your options – The Fire Prevention Specialist can meet with community representatives and provide information about how your community can improve its fire resilience

STEP 3 Choose the best option for your community

Firewise Community Designation – The Council recommends that you begin with this program

- **Benefits**
 1. Primary value is forming core group of interested community members
 2. Opportunity to educate and engage members of your community
 3. Addresses reducing vulnerability of homes to ignition
 4. Assesses wildfire risks to community and develops a plan to minimize those risks
 5. Some insurance companies are beginning to take designation into account
- **Process of becoming a Firewise USA Community**
 1. Form local Firewise Committee
 2. Complete community Firewise assessment
 3. Submit application to national Firewise organization & meet compliance criteria
- **Council assistance & resources available to Firewise Committee**
 1. Coordination of assessment activities
 2. Help in obtaining technical assistance from local & state fire agencies
 3. Assistance with document preparation, review and approval (many Committees do this themselves)

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

- **Benefits**
 1. Can extend beyond the immediate community and engage adjacent landowners
 2. Recommendations can be incorporated into Forest Service plans on adjacent land
 3. Increased collaborative effort with local, state and federal agencies
 4. Identification & prioritization of specific fuels reduction projects
 5. If community has local entity eligible to receive grants, can apply directly for them
- **Process of developing a CWPP**
 1. Plan can be developed by community or by using a consultant
 2. Must involve local government (e.g. CSD), local fire agency & State Forestry – all must sign
 3. When completed, plan is submitted to Lassen-Modoc-Plumas CAL FIRE Unit for approval
- **Council assistance & resources available to community**
 1. Provision of information about CWPP contents and process
 2. Provision of sample CWPPs done by other communities
 3. Assistance in development of CWPP if schedule allows

STEP 4 Implement plan recommendations

Homeowner Association – If your community has a homeowner association and the association wants to develop fire safe standards and enforcement tools, the Council can put you in touch with other associations that have done this.

Defensible Space – Fire resistant materials and fire safe conditions in the area immediately adjacent to a home substantially reduces its vulnerability to ignition by wildfires. Community-wide efforts, such as clean-up days, encourage homeowners to improve their individual lots. Volunteer efforts can also be effective in treating communal property, or helping persons unable to do their own work. The Council also has a program to assist seniors and disabled persons with defensible space improvements.

Hazard Fuels Reduction (HFR) Projects – The reduction of fuels within the community and within a buffer zone around the community is a key component of structure survivability. These projects can be funded and implemented in a number of ways:

- **Community Initiative** – A community, especially larger communities with established organizational infrastructure, can finance projects itself. The first step is generally to hire a Registered Professional Forester to design a project that can be put out to bid to contractors.
- **HFR Grants** – Various grants are available through state and federal agencies to reduce fuels in and around communities, especially if identified as a Community at Risk within the Wildland-Urban Interface. There are two methods of obtaining grant funds:
 1. **Local Organization** – If a community has an approved CWPP and a local organization, such as a CSD or homeowners association, that is eligible to apply for and administer a grant, it may apply directly to the funding entity.
 2. **Fire Safe Council** – All communities, regardless of whether they are Firewise designated or have a CWPP, can request assistance from the Council in obtaining grant funding. Firewise Communities and communities with a CWPP have a much better chance of success: 1) They have identified the work that needs to be done, 2) Landowners have been educated to the importance of the work, 3) Landowners are likely to sign up to have work done on their properties. All HFR work on private property can only be done with the landowner's approval, and projects must be of a sufficient size to be cost effective.

Interested? Okay, back to STEP 1 and get started!

Questions? Contact us:

Hannah Hepner, Coordinator – Plumas County Fire Safe Council
530-283-3739 OR 530-283-0829 PlumasFireSafe@plumascorporation.org