

## PRESS RELEASE

### May 5-11, 2003 is Wildfire Awareness week in California

May 5-11, 2003 is Wildfire Awareness week in California. Plumas County Fire Safe Council members want to encourage all residents to perform their annual defensible space cleanup and make their homes Fire Safe. Homes are often lost to fires started by embers, not the big flames. It is the little things; like vent openings, debris under & around decks, shake roofs, wood piles on porches and pine needles against the structure. By creating a defensible space, not only will your home have a better chance of surviving a wildfire, you will also give your fire department a safer environment and fighting chance. It is not a question of if, but of when, a wildland fire will threaten lives and property in Plumas County. We have been fortunate in the past, but we must continue to take appropriate actions to prevent catastrophic losses in the future. Remember, it just takes a spark.

The video “*Wildfire Preventing Home Ignitions*” is being made available to video stores and libraries throughout the County for residents to check out on free loaner basis. Posters and displays will be placed where these videos & DVD’s are available. The Plumas County Fire Safe Council wants to encourage homeowners to view this free 20 minute video to learn why homes burn in a wildfire, so they may take preventative actions. The Video is a product of Jack Cohen’s wildland fire behavior research at the US Forest Service Fire Sciences Laboratory. In the video, Jack Cohen discusses why it’s the little things that cause homes to burn. The film features excellent footage of a number of wildfires, including cameras inside a research crown fire while it is burning.

Council members would like to remind residents who burn their residues generated from creating defensible space that burn permits are required after May 1. For safe burning residents should: 1) burn in a safe location with tools and water on site, 2) avoid burning on days of strong winds, 3) burn only on a permissive burn day; 4) burn only dry materials and piles, 5) don’t burn tires, processed wood, painted wood or other garbage, and 6) extinguish all piles before leaving the area. Unfortunately every year, some residents don’t follow these simple rules and their fires escape threatening others, or they create smoke conditions that are a nuisance to others. For more information on burning, permits, or regulations, you can contact your local US Forest Service, CDF, fire department office and Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District.

For more information on the Fire Safe Council, visit our website at [www.plumasfiresafe.org](http://www.plumasfiresafe.org) or call your local fire agency or the Plumas County Fire Safe Council at 1-800-973-3320.