

FOR 10/31/18 PUBLICATION

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council's Community Chipping program has wrapped up a second year of no-cost chipping services. In 2018 the program chipped piles at 210 locations, nearly tripling last year's efforts.

Landowners reported 957 hours of clearing and piling in preparation for chipping. Almost 20% of survey respondents indicated that they would have otherwise left the material on site if the program hadn't incentivize its removal. These numbers represent a significant investment by Plumas County residents to create Defensible Space around homes and communities. Which is the goal of the CAL FIRE SRA "Fire Prevention Fund:" to reduce the risk of fire ignition and spread around communities and to educate homeowners about wildfire risks. With shrubs, small trees, and large branches cleared and chipped, ladder "fuels" that can carry flames in the trees' canopy become less of a hazard.

But the benefits are not just a reduction in fire hazards. Half of the program participants would have otherwise burned the material, and a quarter would have transported the green-waste to a transfer station. In either case, chipping it instead benefits local air quality.

Residents in the State Responsibility Area (SRA), who formerly paid the SRA fee, were eligible to participate in the CAL FIRE funded program. However, when the program resumes in 2019, all county residents will be able to participate. To participate residents pile green-waste, according to the program guidelines, and submit an application (available online). The Plumas County Fire Safe Council will then contract a chipping operator on behalf of applicants. Up to 16 linear feet of material can be chipped free-of-charge.

The Fire Safe Council's chipping program coordinator, Gary Parque, is available to answer questions at: 530-283-0829. Applications and more information can also be found on the Plumas County Fire Safe Council's website: plumasfiresafe.org.

Plumas County residents can learn more about the chipping program and other efforts of the Fire Safe Council at the next meeting on Thursday, November 8th, 2018 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am at the Plumas County Planning & Building Services office, 555 Main Street in Quincy. Council meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month and are attended by citizens, business owners, and representatives from local, state, and federal government agencies, who share a common interest in preventing loss of life and minimizing loss of property from wildland fires.