

For 7.31.19 Publication

Plumas Firesafe Council meets Thursday August 8th and encourages residents to create defensible space around their homes

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council invites you to attend this month's scheduled meeting on Thursday, August 8, 2019 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am at the Plumas County Planning & Building Services office, 555 Main Street in Quincy. The mission of the council is *To reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise Community programs and pre-fire activities.* The Council encourages community members to get involved and join us at our monthly meetings to find out what projects are happening county wide and near your neighborhood.

With fire season upon us, any fire that starts could create embers that can travel far ahead of the fire and start new fires, which might be right at your front door. Now is the time to survey your area. Are there areas at your house that embers can collect? They can get in the smallest places and easily start a fire that can destroy your home. If the base of your house has flammable material, this is a perfect place for an ember to land and start a fire. Debris and pine needles in the gutters are another key vulnerable area. Have you looked at your vents? Vents provide the perfect opening for embers. Be sure you have a one-eighth-inch metal screen over the vent opening to create a barrier.

Think about where leaves accumulate when the wind blows. These are the areas where embers will collect and start a fire. Scout out openings like exterior crawl spaces or the areas under wooden porches and decks. Remove any flammable debris that you find underneath, such as leaves and pine needles.

Visualize if there is anything that can burn easily.

Look for the "little things", dry grass growing up against or leading to the foundation of your home, dead vegetation underneath bushes and shrubs, a woodpile next to the home or on the deck. These are places where an ember can land. If you believe you can drop burning matches on the ground around the outside of your home and feel confident that a fire would not start, then you understand fire behavior around your home.

The first 5 feet is the most critical to "harden" your home. Be sure there is nothing flammable against your house. Move those flammable "treasures" you have stored next to your house away! The primary goal for Firewise landscaping is fuel reduction — limiting the amount of flammable vegetation and materials surrounding the home and increasing the moisture content of remaining vegetation. The home itself and everything around it up to 100 feet is known as the 'home ignition zone.' Space your plants out, limb your trees 6' – 10' from the ground and remove any dead vegetation in this zone.

The success of your home surviving wildfire rests solely on you! There are not enough fire engines to protect every home. Would you feel comfortable with your home surviving a wildfire if you had to evacuate? Creating defensible space and tending to the little things is something that should be on your to do list throughout the summer. It is not

a one shot deal. Keep an eye on that first 5 feet from your structure and remember the small things!

For more info on preparing your home for wildfire visit www.readyforwildfire.org,

For local information, resources available for homeowners in Plumas County and info on how you can be a Firewise Community visit Plumas County Firesafe Councils website at www.plumasfiresafe.org

Written by Sue McCourt