

## FIREWISE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE MITIGATION EFFORT DATA SUBMISSION

Dear University Park Resident:

### **Why are University Park (UP) residents asked to read and carefully digest this Firewise USA information?**

Colorado Springs Fire Department officials have asked that our community cooperate in providing specific data detailing the type and extent of wildfire risk-reduction efforts on private property. This is important because tracking vegetation and organic material removal in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) provides CSFD and forestry officials with critical data regarding the quantities of potential wildfire fuel that are being eliminated from different WUI locations within the City year after year. Tracking also aids fire and forestry officials in determining the optimal allocation of human resources and equipment to areas in need of wildfire mitigation or reforestation. For our community this information feeds into the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) database, is analyzed, and helps determine whether we have earned, and annually continue to qualify for, the privilege of being designated a "FIREWISE USA COMMUNITY," a distinction we've carried since Dec. 2014.

### **What is the significance of Firewise USA?**

As most UP residents are aware, with the CSFD Staff validation, our community has been designated as a Firewise USA site by NFPA. The Firewise program is co-sponsored by the USDA Forestry Service, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters. We earned this designation by executing a well-coordinated, sustained community wildfire mitigation plan involving UP private, HOA, and adjacent City properties.

Firewise efforts assume that risk of injury or death or damage to property from brush, grass, or forest fires can be reduced by taking proactive wildfire mitigation action, and the Firewise program helps to direct and promote these efforts, in cooperation with professional fire reduction experts. ***Moreover, with current proof of this status (available on the UP website), residents of our Firewise community may qualify for reduce rates on their homeowner's insurance.***

### **How does our Community benefit from the Firewise Program?**

1) *Framework for action:* Meeting the Firewise site criteria encourages communities to organize and find focused direction for their wildfire safety efforts. Working within the Firewise framework encourages local solutions for fire risk reduction by involving homeowners in taking individual responsibility for preparing their homes accordingly. The Firewise Program also teaches people how to adapt to living with fire risk, and encourages neighbors to work together, and to work with community fire officials, in an effort to prevent losses.

2) *Learning about wildfire risks:* Through the Firewise Program, residents learn about fire risk and the simple steps they can do to reduce them. Residents can connect with local fire fighters, State forestry professionals, and national researchers to continue to learn about fire risk reduction.

3) *Improved preparedness*: Proactive risk reduction through mitigation, knowledge about what to do in a fire emergency, and having an "escape" plan, can help reduce risk and anxiety in an emergency situation.

4) *Access to funding and assistance*: Preference is sometimes given to Firewise communities over other candidate sites when wildfire safety or fuel mitigation grants are allocated. If requests for grant money are equally worthy, some officials tend to have more confidence in communities that have demonstrated the foresight of becoming a Firewise site. Grants often go to communities that can show how they have helped themselves.

### **What can UP residents do to help in identifying wildfire risk-reduction efforts?**

- Data from mitigation efforts from Community-wide joint City and UP planned projects, such as a neighborhood chipping effort, will be automatically collected by the City and the UP HOA, and **no resident reporting of this activity is requested.**
- **However, we request individual homeowner cooperation in providing the HOA with any risk-reduction efforts completed, where wildfire mitigation staff or volunteers did not plan or participate in these measures.**

### **What types of mitigation efforts should individuals report?**

Such risk reduction efforts can include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **House:**

- Activities include installation of new fire-resistant roofing, cleaning leaves or needles from roofs or gutters, screening vents, decks/porches free of flammable materials, existing wood decks replaced by more fire-resistant composite materials, under-deck areas free of flammable materials and vegetation.

#### **Immediate Zone 0-5 ft. from the foundation:**

- Activities include installation of brick or mortar patios or walkways, replacing combustible mulches with stone/gravel, tree and shrub removal raking and removing pine needles, leaves, litter and debris, trim tree limbs that overhang this area, move fire wood into an extended zone 30-100 ft. from a residence.

#### **Intermediate zone 5-30 ft. from foundation or attachments (decks/porches):**

- Activities include lawn and native grass maintenance, space developed between trees and shrubs to create clusters, tree thinning/limbing to reduce crown fire potential, etc.

#### **Extended zone 30-100 ft. from foundation or attachments:**

- Include needle, leaf and debris removal, tree thinning to reduce crown fire potential, etc.

#### **Adjacent or other homeowner-owned property:**

- Include tree thinning, vegetation/brush removal, grass maintenance, fire break construction, etc.

### **To whom should we report completed mitigation activity?**

Please summarize the type and extent of completed work (see description below) and refer the information to Derek Patterson, Property Manager at Z&R Property Mgmt., at (719) 594-0506, or e-mail him at [Derek@ZandRMgmt.com](mailto:Derek@ZandRMgmt.com). The Wildfire Mitigation Committee will collate all inputs monthly and provide the raw data to CSFD, who will enter the information into the NFPA Firewise Portal. This will help determine our annual Firewise status.

### **When reporting completed mitigation work, what information is to be provided by individual homeowners?**

#### **Quantity:**

- Provide the number of loads of vegetation removed by dump truck (if a contractor was hired), or number of dumpster loads (specify 10 yd., 20yd. or 30yd.), or pick-up truck loads (specify 6yd. or 8yd. capacity, for example).
- Provide numbers and size of leaf bags or barrels of vegetation removed.

#### **Cost:**

- Provide one total figure combining cost of man-hours worked (if contractor was hired), and transportation cost if removal was done by contractor or was picked up at the curb by a removal service at extra homeowner cost.

#### **Number of hours worked:**

- Specify the time spent, in hours, to accomplish the mitigation project.

#### **Date:**

- Please provide the day/month/year that a project was completed.

#### **Contact**

If University Park homeowners have questions about wildfire mitigation data-collection or reporting, feel free to call Doug Harris, UP Wildfire Mitigation Committee (WMC) Chairman, at (719) 302-3450.

**The University Park HOA, and the Colorado Springs Fire Department, thank you in advance for your cooperation in providing fire officials with the additional "Firewise" information described above; the information you provide will aid City fire officials to best direct and promote wildfire risk-reduction efforts.**