



Greenhorn Firewise Community

September 2026 Newsletter

Hello Neighbors...

Wasn't that a nice downpour we had a couple weeks ago? But remember that fire season is far from over. Fall often brings dry winds, and that one rain isn't nearly enough to bring down the fire danger. Be especially vigilant on [Red Flag days](#). (Note that we will post our community red flag on Greenhorn near Brunswick on those days.)

We've got a few new topics this month, but for the most part, we just hope you will keep up your evacuation readiness, your defensible space, and your situational awareness.

Reminders...

Don't neglect your [defensible space](#) maintenance, especially in "zone zero" (within five feet of your structures). Leaves and needles are starting to fall, and windy, dry days are still ahead.

Keep up your situational awareness, especially on windy days.

- Be extra cautious on [Red Flag Days](#). Don't let your gas tank (or electric charge) get below half (preferably at least $\frac{3}{4}$).
- Know your [evacuation zone](#).
- Make sure you're signed up for [Nevada County Alerts](#).
- Consult [multiple information sources](#). [Watch Duty](#) and [YubaNet](#) are especially helpful.

Be ready to evacuate if needed:

- Keep your [go bags](#) ready. You might need to add some warmer clothing. Also check medications and refresh your water (and maybe food).
- Review your [evacuation plan](#). Familiarize yourself with [alternate routes](#) (including "unofficial" ones that may cross neighboring properties).
- [Leaving early increases your chance of survival](#).

Is Your Woodstove Ready for Winter?

It's still a little early for heating, but it pays to be ready ahead of time and to make sure your woodstove is safe. Heating fires account for 36 percent of residential fires in rural areas every year. Often, these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes. So if you haven't already, now would be a good time to have your woodstove(s) inspected and cleaned if necessary. It may not even be too late to get that summer discount! Here are a couple of good resources:

- [Wood Stove Safety](#) (Placer County)
- [Best Wood-Burning Practices](#) (US EPA)

And remember--even if it does get cold, don't store firewood within 30 feet of your home or other structures until fire season is over (when CALFIRE announces residential burning is allowed).

Residential Burning

The outdoor burn ban is still in effect. Even if the weather cools down and we get a little rain, CALFIRE will not allow outdoor residential burning until there is sufficient moisture in the ground and vegetation. Always [check burn status](#) before starting a burn.

With the cooler weather coming, it IS a great time of year to start preparing your burn piles so you're ready to go when the restrictions are lifted.

- [Get your permit](#) ahead of time (permits are usually required the first few weeks of the season before open burning is allowed). Permits are good for a year, so if you got one in the spring, it's still valid.
- Build your piles no more than 4x4 ft (the maximum size during permit season).
- Clear all flammable material and vegetation within 10-feet of the outer edge of piles and down to the bare earth.
- Locate your piles where you can have water on hand, and away from low hanging branches.
- Consider covering your piles with tarps or forest paper if rain is expected.

Help Us Keep Our Firewise Community Recognition

Firewise Communities must renew their recognition by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) every year. Being recognized means that homeowners can get a discount on their insurance from some carriers (the CalFAIR Plan that most of us are on being one).

As part of our annual recognition process we have to submit information to the NFPA showing investment of a certain level of resources (time and money) by homeowners/renters on improvements that impact the fire safety around their homes and roadways.

Please visit our website to learn more and complete a [Firewise Activity Form](#). We prefer that you use the online form, but there is also a fillable PDF that you can email (or print and mail if you must). You can report at any time, and multiple times—whenever you do work—but we do need to make our final report in mid-November. Forms submitted after that time will be counted for next year.

A wide variety of activities and expenses can be submitted, such as attending fire safety meetings, cleaning your gutters, limbing up trees (or paying someone else to), replacing shrubs with hardscape, chipper costs, vent screens, tool purchases, and even vehicle mileage. [A full list is available on the NFPA website](#). This is an honor system: no receipts are required.

Community Survey

You can still [take our survey about what concerns you related to wildfire](#).

Have Questions or Concerns? [Contact your Section Representative](#) or email us at greenhornfirewiseboard@gmail.com.