



Greenhorn Firewise Community

December 2025 Newsletter

Hello Neighbors...

After three weeks of warm, sunny days the rain is back (and we need it!). Snow is not predicted, but [make sure you're ready](#) for possible downed trees and power outages. And have a wonderful holiday season!

(Please note: Underlined blue text links directly to pertinent information on the Internet).

What Is a Firewise Community?

Nevada County leads the nation with well over 100 recognized Firewise Communities, representing tens of thousands of residents and landowners. But how many know what a Firewise Community is and what their role is in the program? As a reader of this newsletter, you're probably more knowledgeable than most. Can you help us by sharing this information with your friends and neighbors?

The Firewise USA® program, led by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), is a collaborative framework to help neighbors get organized and take action to reduce wildfire risks at the local level.

We, your Greenhorn Firewise board of 12 neighborhood volunteers, are just a small part of the program. To become (and remain) a Firewise Community, a group of volunteers must form a committee (that's us) to complete a number of required tasks, including:

- Conducting a risk assessment (which must be repeated every five years).
- Creating an action plan (which must be updated every three years).
- Keeping track of and reporting (annually) the community's investment (time and money) in these activities. (Report your activities here: [GFC Firewise Activity Report](#))
- Educating and encouraging residents of the community to invest in wildfire safety efforts such as home hardening, defensible space (home and shared roads), evacuation planning, etc.

The heart of the program is community action--neighbors recognizing that we are all in this together and working together proactively. Only with broad community engagement can we accomplish the kind of work that needs to be done for our neighborhoods to be less vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire and for our roads to be safe for evacuation.

The most tangible benefit of being in an NFPA-recognized Firewise Community is the discount you can get on your fire insurance (the FAIR plan for most of us). **But the REAL benefit is the increased peace of mind from building a more wildfire-prepared community.** Knowing that your home may survive and that you can get out safely if needed. **That means you and your neighbors doing home hardening, defensible space, roadside clearance, fire-adapted**

landscaping, and evacuation planning. We (the board) are here for information and assistance, but this is by nature a grassroots effort.

Holiday Fire Safety

December is a month of celebrations and colder weather. We enjoy decorating our homes, cooking for family and friends, and more. Festive celebrations, candles and lights, and winter greens are hallmarks of this time of year. Have a safe holiday season by following smart practices with your lights, candles, cooking, and trees/garlands. Here are a few key tips, and some resources where you can find out more.

- Check lights for loose bulbs and damaged wires, avoid overloading circuits, and turn lights off before leaving the house or turning in for the night. [13 Safety Tips for Christmas Lights](#) (Family Handyman)
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from flammable items or use flameless candles. [Deck the Halls With Fire Safety](#) (short video from the National Fire Protection Association: NFPA)
- Keep your tree watered and remove your tree or garlands from the house when they become dry. This video shows how much faster a dry tree burns. [Christmas Tree Fire Turns Deadly Within Seconds](#) (NFPA).
- Practice fire safe cooking: Stay in the kitchen, keep flammable items such as oven mitts away from the stove, be extra careful with hot oil, and have a lid or emergency fire blanket available if you need to smother a grease fire. ([Cooking Safety](#), NFPA)

Community Fire Safety Resources

- **Greenhorn Firewise Community.** That's us! www.greenhornfirewise.org
- **Wildfire Ready Coalition of Nevada County Communities.** <https://wildfirereadync.org/learning-center/>
- **Nevada County Office of Emergency Services.** www.readynevadacounty.org
- **Fire Safe Council of Nevada County.** <https://www.areyousafe.com>
- **CALFIRE.** <https://readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/firewise-communities/>
- **Nevada County Consolidated Fire.** <https://www.nccfire.com/what-can-you-do-to-harden-you-home-against-wildfire>

News and Reminders

- Look for our informational letter and survey in your mailbox in January. We look forward to getting your feedback.
- The 2026 Firewise Community certificate (which you will need to get your insurance discount next year) will be posted on our website in early January ([current certificate](#) is valid through 2025).
- [Donations are always welcome.](#) If you are able, consider a tax deductible contribution to help us cover ongoing expenses such as insurance for the shared water tanks, mailings, etc.