TOOLKIT

WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY

May 2, 2020

Sponsored by StateFarm™

HOW WILL YOUR COMMUNITY PREPARE THIS YEAR?

Wildfires across the United States have cost more than 100 lives and more than $25 billion in property losses in just the last two years. That's why it's so important to take steps to improve the wildfire safety of your home and community.

PUT SAFETY FIRST. ON THE FIRST SATURDAY IN MAY.

Take the first step by participating in Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on Saturday, May 2, 2020. You can help your neighborhood create a sense of community by working together on a project that can make a real difference. Consider including the local groups listed to the right to involve as many people and resources as possible.

PLAN YOUR PROJECT WITH THIS TOOLKIT.

Inside you'll find the tools you need to start your community's own customized project, step by step. Start with a simple checklist. Then explore a list of possible projects. Move on to promoting your efforts, safety tips, funding, and more. Just turn the page.

YOUR COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Chamber of Commerce/Business
- Faith Community
- Federal and State Land Agencies
- Fire Department
- Local Utilities, such as Electric, Natural Gas, etc.
- Park District
- Private Land Trusts
- School District
- Street and/or Public Works Department
- Water District

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Work your way through this checklist as you complete each corresponding section of the toolkit.

PICK A PROJECT

Prep Day projects can vary in size, shape, and scope to fit your community.

- [ ] Gather neighbors, friends, and family members who want to participate in a project. Don't forget to check with local community groups for more ideas and participants.
- [ ] Review the project suggestions and select one that fits your community's needs. Then assign tasks to team members to help with logistics.
- [ ] Pick a time and location for your event—Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on May 2, 2020, is a good start!

SPEAK UP AND STAY SAFE

Communication is key to spreading the word and having a safe, smooth project.

- [ ] Promote your event locally with flyers and announcements, and invite others in your community to participate.
- [ ] Review the safety tips and gear suggestions with everyone who will participate.

POST AND PARTICIPATE

Spread the word beyond your community by making your project visible to the greater world.

- [ ] Get help paying for your community's project by applying for one of the $500 nationwide funding awards from State Farm.
- [ ] Post your project online on NFPA's Prep Day Map to share with the entire country.
- [ ] Post your photos on Facebook and Twitter (#WildfirePrepDay).
- [ ] Most of all, find a way to participate on Wildfire Community Preparedness Day! Don't forget to take photos and video for all to see!

PREPARE AND PROTECT WITH YOUR PROJECT

Pick projects that will fit your community and make a real difference in its future safety. Remember, inspect your surroundings, keep things tidy, and share info with others—"Check, Clear, Communicate."

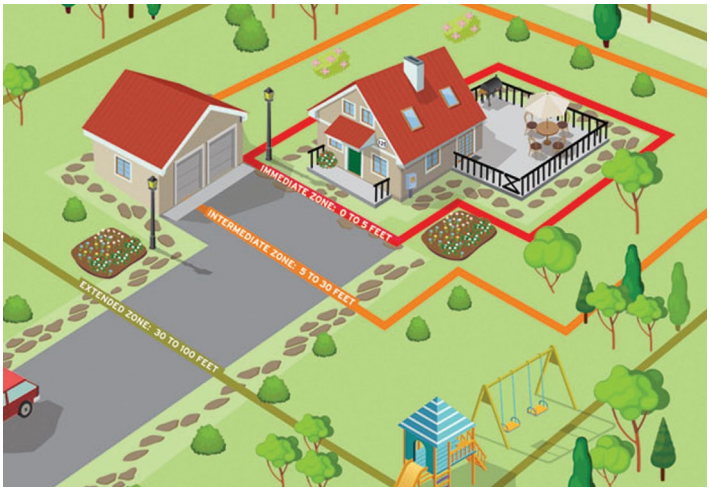
Projects that reduce wildfire risk and increase preparedness can be accomplished by people of all ages with a variety of time commitments. You might be asking, "What can I do in a single day to help stay safer from wildfire?" The answer is—a lot!

CHECK

- Can you see your home's address number from the street? How about your neighbors'? If not, trim overgrown vegetation covering or blocking the numbers on your homes in case firefighters need to find you.
- Locate two alternate routes out of your neighborhood (besides the one normally used) and plan and practice a family evacuation drill using those alternate routes.
- Measure how close wood piles are located to the home. If any are closer than 30 feet, move them farther away from structures. Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire screening no larger than 1/8-inch mesh to help keep embers out during a wildfire.
- Check your possessions. Visit the Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association to get free checklists. Take video and photos of your possessions so you'll have documentation to replace belongings.
- Check in on others! Help elderly relatives or neighbors enter emergency numbers into their cell phones. Using large type, post their phone number and street address above their landline phone so it can easily be seen when providing information to an emergency dispatcher.

CLEAR

- Rake and remove pine needles and dry leaves to a minimum of 3 to 5 feet from a home's foundation. Over time, continue up to a 30-foot distance around the home. Dispose of collected debris in appropriate trash receptacles.
- Sweep porches and decks, clearing them of leaves and pine needles. Rake under decks, porches, sheds, and play structures.
- On mature trees, use hand pruners and loppers to remove low-hanging tree branches up to a height of 4 feet from the ground (specific height depends on the type and size of tree). Collect downed tree limbs and broken branches and take them to a disposal site.



Rake and remove pine needles and dry leaves to a minimum of 3 to 5 feet from a home.

PREPARE AND PROTECT WITH YOUR PROJECT

(Continued)

CLEAR (CONTINUED)

- Remove items stored under decks and porches and relocate them to a storage area. Gasoline cans and portable propane tanks should never be stored indoors or near the home.
- Join forces with neighbors and pool your resources to pay for a chipper service to help clear slash/debris.
- Clear out your closets! Hold a garage sale and donate the proceeds to your local fire department's wildland fire team.

COMMUNICATE

- Create a family communication plan and build or update a 72-hour evacuation kit for you, your family, and your pets.
- Distribute wildfire safety information by setting up a table or leaving handouts at a grocery or hardware store (other high-traffic locations work, too).
- Send free Firewise USA® and emergency preparedness tips through social media or text messaging.
- Contact the local Office of Emergency Management about registering your mobile number to receive emergency notifications on your own device. After registering your own number, register those of your family.
- Inform young adults who babysit outside the home that they need to learn the family's emergency plan for wildfires and evacuations.
- Work with neighbors to develop a phone tree that can be used to alert everyone about a fire or evacuation.

MAJOR FIRE EVENTS 2017—2019

OCT. 2017 — Firestorm, Northern CA
44 dead, 8,700 structures destroyed

NOV. 2018 — Camp Fire, Northern CA
85 dead, 18,800 structures destroyed

OCT. 23 — Kincade Fire, Sonoma County
76,000 acres, 189 buildings destroyed, 90,000 buildings threatened

OCT. 28 — Getty Fire, Los Angeles
7,000+ residences in mandatory evacuation zone

2019—A total of 200,000 people evacuated for State of Emergency

Source: Insurance Information Institute

SPREAD THE WORD

Once you've picked a project, don't forget to tell others what you're doing to create a safer community. Promote your project to those in your community, the press, and local officials. Our tools make it easy.

FLYER TEMPLATE

- Download and customize this flyer for your specific event.
- Distribute throughout your community to increase participation and awareness.

DOWNLOAD FLYER >

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Download this announcement template to customize and communicate your message.
- An official announcement can add credibility, so send one along to everyone from elected official to the local press.

DOWNLOAD ANNOUNCEMENT >

BE PREPARED. BE SAFE.

Before starting a project, it's important to review the safety tips and gear with each participant. And always leave the power equipment to trained adults.

Work Together—For safety purposes, most projects are best accomplished by two or more people. It's always a good plan to work in pairs, or more.

SAFETY TIPS

1. **Bending:** Keep your feet shoulder-width apart and move your whole body as one unit; bend at your hips and knees, not at your waist.
2. **Lifting:** Ask a friend for help. Use slow, smooth movements while lifting, and keep your body facing the object. Keep the load close to your body between your shoulders and waist—this puts less strain on back muscles.
3. **Stacking:** For firewood, refer to this article from Popular Mechanics.
4. **Moving:** Use caution when moving and storing any type of hazardous items (gasoline, portable propane tanks, etc.). Many products can be dangerous if handled or stored incorrectly—and can harm your health and the environment.
5. **Protecting:** With hand tools, always wear eye protection. Handle sharp-edged and pointed tools carefully—never carry them in your pocket. Keep them close to your side, with the points and heavy ends downward and outward.
6. **Inspecting:** Tools should be inspected to ensure that they are in good condition before use. Do not use broken or unsafe equipment.
7. **Trashing:** If you are removing trash, be aware of nails, broken glass, and sharp metals. Always ensure that an adult works with minors.
8. **Trusting:** Minors should never accept an invitation from someone they don't know to enter a home or other structure—unless accompanied by a trusted adult or group leader.

BE AWARE!

When working outdoors, maintain good situational awareness about the conditions of the terrain. Your work can disturb critters or take place in tricky environments.

BEES

SNAKES

SLIPPERY CONDITIONS

SAFETY GEAR

Always use good safety practices, including wearing the proper clothing and personal protective equipment, especially when operating power tools.

- **Extremities:** Wear work gloves, long sleeve shirts, long pants, and nonslip closed-toe shoes or boots.
- **Eyes:** Always wear eye protection/safety goggles.
- **Ears:** Industrial style ear plugs/ear muffs need to be worn in loud work areas.
- **Head:** If you are cutting overhead branches, wear a hard hat.

TAKE ACTION

GET $500 TO WORK ON YOUR PROJECT

Now that you've chosen a project, submit an application to win one of 150 funding awards made possible with generous donations from State Farm.

If you are applying for an award for a project in the US and US territories, the application period opens in January 2020. Download Application

For funding awards in Canada, the application period will open in November through Firesmart.

BEST PRACTICES FOR APPLICATIONS

Collaborate with others to develop a project plan. Examine areas of your community where a one-day project can have the greatest impact. Clearly define the following:

Who:	List specific groups and/or volunteers. Who is planning the process? Who is supporting it?
Where/When:	Detail the location (home sites vs. common areas). Remember, part of the event must occur on Prep Day (May 2).
What/How:	Describe what you want to accomplish and how it will benefit the community. What are the steps to complete your project and how will the funds be used?

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

Add your project to our nationwide list of communities taking part in Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on the **Prep Day Map.**

We also want to hear what you're planning and what you've accomplished at #WildfirePrepDay on **Twitter** or **Facebook**.