



# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Introduction to Understanding the Wildland Urban Interface

No. CR-2014-1 March 19, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe the importance of fire as a tool for maintaining and enhancing overall forest health.

**W**ildland Urban Interface (WUI) — Fire-Adapted Communities (FACs) is the first of a series of discussions about creating FACs in the WUI. In the 2012 Annual Report released by the National Association of State Foresters, 72,397 communities are at risk from wildland fire.

**Historical Perspective:** Wildfire has been part of our history since the first lightning strike. Fire is a natural disturbance force that affects and defines ecosystems. For many years, wildland fire was aggressively excluded to protect both public and private investments and to prevent what was considered the destruction of forests, shrub lands, grasslands, etc.

Conditions mounted over many decades by the accumulation of naturally occurring forest debris, slash from logging operations, and trees destroyed by insect infestations. When these fuels ignite, they burn hotter, spread faster, last longer and cover more area. There is a growing recognition that past land use practices, combined with the effects of fire exclusion, have resulted in heavy accumulation of dead vegetation, altered fuel arrangements, and changes in vegetative structure and composition. When dead, fallen material accumulates on the ground, it creates a continuous arrangement of fuel.

Fire in areas of altered vegetation can adversely affect other important ecosystem components:

- Insects and disease.
- Wildlife population.
- Hydrological processes.
- Soil structure and mineralogy.
- Nutrient cycling.

Any of the components, if altered by severe fire, can diminish the long-term sustainability of the land.

Although restoring fire to ecosystems has gained broader acceptance, several factors hinder its use on an ecologically significant scale:

- Slow public acceptance of fire as a legitimate wildland fire management tool.
- Lengthy time periods required to reach agreement on treatments and required actions.
- Increasing presence of human communities within wildland fire environments.

Grazing, mechanical cutting or mowing, or chemical treatment may be employed to restore ecosystems and reduce hazardous wildland fuels. While these methods can be helpful, they cannot always replace the role and value of fire in maintaining overall health and balance of an ecosystem. The use of fire will continue to be an important tool in maintaining and enhancing overall forest health.

In addition to unprecedented amounts of accumulated wildland fuels, the population of the United States has shifted. More people are moving from urban to rural areas prone to wildland fire. Why the shift?

- Rural areas generally offer more affordable housing than urban areas.
- General increase in desire to live away from urban area.
- The technological boom of the 1980s created more financial resources, so people purchased second and third homes in rural areas.
- Many of the “rural immigrants” often “expect” urban-level services in their rural living environment.

Sources: <http://headwaterseconomics.org> and <http://silvis.forest.wisc.edu/maps/wui/state>.

Stayed tuned for the soon-to-be-released, recently developed U.S. Fire Administration’s course, “Wildland Urban Interface: Fire-Adapted Communities,” offered at the National Fire Academy.

**For archived downloads, go to:**

[www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/)



# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy

No. CR-2014-2 March 26, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to explain why the national cohesive wildland fire management strategy, called the Cohesive Strategy, was initiated; identify the three goals; and briefly describe some wildland fire mitigation activities in which local fire departments can participate.

### Background

A rapid escalation of extreme wildfire behavior has marked the past two decades, accompanied by soaring wildfire suppression costs and significant increases in risk to responders, citizens, homes, property, communities, landscapes and other values. In November 2009, President Obama signed into law the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act of 2009, which called for the development of a national cohesive wildland fire management strategy. Recognizing that the challenges in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and wildland fire management require interconnected solutions, the Cohesive Strategy brought together federal, state, tribal and local governments, nongovernmental partners, and public stakeholders to identify, define and address wildland fire problems and opportunities for successful wildland fire management across the United States.



This photo depicts Waldo Canyon Fire, Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 2012. (Firepix: [http://www.nifc.gov/wildlandPhotos/wildlandPhotos\\_main.html](http://www.nifc.gov/wildlandPhotos/wildlandPhotos_main.html))

### Cohesive Strategy Development and Goals

The development of the Cohesive Strategy has been accomplished in three phases. In Phase I, three primary factors were identified that present the greatest challenges and opportunities to make a positive difference in wildland fire management across America. These factors, which would become the goals of the Cohesive Strategy, are:

- Restore and maintain landscapes.
- Create Fire-Adapted Communities (FACs).
- Improve wildfire response.

Regional Strategy Committees (RSCs), representing the Northeast, Southeast and West, were brought together in Phase II to identify regional challenges, improve communication among partners, and identify proposed strategies and opportunities for improvement.

During the first part of Phase III, the Cohesive Strategy's National Science and Analysis Team conducted risk analyses for each of the three regions, which were followed by the development of Regional Action Plans by each RSC. A trade-off analysis was conducted at the national level, and the resultant National Strategy describes how the nation can focus future efforts in making strategic investments to reduce the severe effects of wildfire on areas of high risk.

### Cohesive Strategy Status

The creation of the National Strategy marks the end of the development stage of the Cohesive Strategy. The final report is awaiting approval, and its release is anticipated for the winter of 2014. Implementation is now underway as stakeholders in each region come together to address the identified actions. At the national level, work has begun on the National Action Plan, which is expected to be released in the spring of 2014.

### Opportunities for the Fire Service

There are many areas and activities identified in the Regional Action Plans where local fire departments can partner with their communities and other agencies to address potential local WUI and wildland fire risks. Some of these include conducting community and homeowner risk assessments, providing education and guidance regarding the creation of FACs, being a partner in the creation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and ensuring that personnel with wildfire suppression responsibilities have appropriate training and equipment.

**For more information** and access to all regional and national reports developed by the Cohesive Strategy effort, please visit [www.forestsandrangelands.gov](http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov).

**U.S. Fire Administration's Link:** [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/wildland](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/wildland).

**For archived downloads, go to:**

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## Wildland Urban Interface Terminology

No. CR-2014-3 April 2, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to recognize and apply commonly used Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) terminology.

The terms within this series provide an introduction to the terminology used in the WUI arena.

**Community Wildfire Protection Plan** — a plan developed in the collaborative framework established by the Wildland Fire Leadership Council and agreed to by state, tribal and local governments, local fire departments, other stakeholders, and federal land management agencies managing land in the vicinity of the planning area. A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types of methods of treatment on federal and nonfederal land that will protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure. A CWPP also recommends measures to reduce structural ignitability throughout the at-risk community. A CWPP may address issues, such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, or structural protection — or all of the above.

**Defensible Space** — the area around a structure where flammable vegetation and objects are managed to create a zone in which firefighters can operate safely in order to help protect a home during a wildfire. This space is wide enough to prevent direct flame impingement and reduce the amount of radiant heat reaching the structure. The defensible space for each structure varies, depending on the type of vegetation and topography.

**Fire-Adapted Community** — a human community consisting of informed and prepared citizens collaboratively planning and taking action to safely coexist with wildland fire.

**Hazard Reduction** — any treatment on living and dead fuels that reduces the potential spread or consequences of fire. Also, often referred to as hazard mitigation.

**Home Assessment** — the evaluation of a dwelling and its immediate surrounding(s) to determine its potential to escape damage by an approaching wildland fire. It includes the fuels and vegetation in the yard and adjacent to the structure, roof environment, decking and siding materials, prevailing winds, topography, fire history, etc., with the intent of mitigating fire hazards and risks.

**Preparedness** — activities that lead to safe, efficient and cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management objectives through appropriate planning and coordination; mental readiness to recognize changes in fire danger and act promptly when action is appropriate; and the range of deliberate, critical tasks and activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the capability to protect against, respond to and recover from domestic incidents.

**Wildland Fire** — any nonstructural fire that occurs in the wildland. Three distinct types of wildland fire have been defined, and they are wildfire, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire.

**Wildland Urban Interface** — the line, area or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.

A more detailed collection of terms can be found in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology at [www.nwccg.gov](http://www.nwccg.gov). In addition, an applied research project submitted as part of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program titled "Risk Reduction: A Rural Communities' Introduction to the Concept of Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Prevention" can be found at [www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo35212.pdf](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo35212.pdf).

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# Coffee Break Training-Community Risk Reduction

## A Communitywide Approach to Preparedness

No. CR-2014-4 April 9, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify Fire-Adapted Community (FAC) components and explain the benefits of promoting community wildfire risk reduction.

Every year, thousands of wildfires burn millions of acres across the United States. Wildfires do not recognize property or jurisdictional lines — there are no boundaries. It's not if, but when, the next wildfire will threaten your Wildland Urban Interface community. More people live in places where wildfire is a risk, but communities are also getting smarter at how to better adapt homes, landscapes and other community assets to fire. Living in an FAC means you are prepared for the next wildfire. Is your community fire-adapted?



This graphic depicts common input/components that contribute to Fire-Adapted Communities. (Graphic/U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service)

### What Is a Fire-Adapted Community?

An FAC is a human community consisting of informed and prepared citizens collaboratively planning and taking action to safely coexist with wildland fire and to reduce the wildfire threat. An FAC helps connect all those who have a role in wildfire education, planning and action with organizations and programs that provide comprehensive resources for their specific wildfire mitigation needs. The combination of efforts strengthens a community's resilience for the next wildfire threat. Actions address resident safety, homes, neighborhoods, businesses and infrastructure, forests, parks, open spaces, and other community assets. The more actions that a community takes, the more fire-adapted it becomes.

### Why Are Fire-Adapted Communities Important and Necessary?

The more effective way to reduce wildfire impact is through a collaborative approach with all community members and leaders. FACs are important because of:

- Increases in firefighter and public safety.
- Increases in community resilience and post-disaster economic recovery.
- Decreases of funds necessary to protect the community.
- Decreases in dependence on suppression and response.

Becoming an FAC is a process and includes characteristics, such as the following:

- It is in or near a fire-adapted ecosystem.
- It has adequate local fire suppression capacity to meet most community protection needs.
- Its landscaping and structures are designed, constructed, retrofitted and maintained in a manner that is ignition-resistant.
- It has local codes (building, planning, zoning and fire prevention codes) that require ignition-resistant home design and building materials.
- Fuels on land near and inside the community are treated and maintained for safety.
- It has and uses a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- It has built other safety features, such as buffers between fuels and the community; safe, designated evacuation routes; and safe zones in the community when evacuation is not advisable.

The FACs' website offers information and specific actions you can take to reduce your risk to the next wildfire. Get started today by using tools available at [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org).

For additional information, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/wildland](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/wildland).

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# Coffee Break Training-Community Risk Reduction

## What Does It Mean to be Fire-Adapted?

No. CR-2014-5 April 16, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify roles and actions to take before a wildfire threatens.

**M**ore and more people are making their homes in woodland settings, in or near forests or rural areas, or in remote mountain sites. Homeowners enjoy the beauty of the environment but face very real dangers of wildfire. Wildfires often begin unnoticed. They spread quickly, igniting brush, trees and homes. Homeowners can reduce the risk by preparing before a wildfire threatens.

A Fire-Adapted Community (FAC) accepts fire as part of the natural landscape. The community understands its fire risk and takes action **before** a wildfire to minimize harm to residents, homes, businesses, parks, utilities and other community assets. These collective actions empower all residents to be safer in their environment. To help prepare your community, consider **your personal role** in making it fire-adapted.

- Meet with your family to decide what to do and where to go if a wildfire threatens your area.
- Build homes with fire-resistant materials.
- Prepare an emergency planning kit and safety plan.
- Encourage your local fire department to participate in the Ready, Set, Go! Program.
- Work with neighbors to get recognized through the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program.
- Locate your community's resident safety zone.
- Encourage the development and implementation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- Identify shared responsibilities with other community members, and explore local tools and solutions.
- Promote the adoption of building codes and local regulations that address structural and site vulnerabilities to wildfire.
- Landscape gardens using native plants.
- Talk to your insurance agent about your wildfire coverage and how to reduce risk.
- Meet with your local forester to better understand your region's unique fire risks.
- Support land management practices in parks, forests and natural areas that reduce wildfire spread to your community.

### Who Implements Fire-Adapted Community Tools?

FAC tools are designed to help residents, businesses and local governments work together to prepare for wildfire. Everyone has a role in implementing the tools, including but not limited to:

- Home and property owners.
- Local and state governmental organizations.
- Firefighters.
- Local businesses.
- Planners.
- Developers.
- Insurance agents.
- Landscape architects.
- Emergency management personnel.
- Land managers.
- Civic and community leaders.

A great resource for learning more about preparing for and protecting from wildfire is the FACs' website at [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org). Its information addresses how residents, fire departments, community planners, land managers and others can take a role in reducing wildfire risk.

For additional Wildland Urban Interface information, visit this link from the U.S. Fire Administration: [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/wildland](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/wildland).



View reference materials for Fire-Adapted Communities at [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org).

**For archived downloads, go to:**

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# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Next Steps to Becoming Fire-Adapted

No. CR-2014-6 April 23, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify information about prewildfire risk-reduction efforts and other preparedness resources.

**H**omeowners, firefighters, emergency responders, land managers and community leaders all have an important role in preparing their community for the next wildfire. Each area of the country has different landscapes, seasons and other factors that influence wildfires. Homes, businesses, parks, forests, utilities, municipal water supplies and other community assets are all vulnerable to wildfire.

**Start With Your Home:** Doing little things can make a big difference. Trees, shrubs and other vegetation surrounding your home play a big role in how well your house survives a wildfire. Reduce your risk by making smart landscaping decisions and maintaining your property. A free downloadable wildfire risk assessment and checklist can assist in identifying your home's vulnerability to embers and flames and offer effective affordable solutions. Wildfire embers can travel over 1 mile; control what happens when they land.

**Make Sure You Have an Emergency Preparedness Plan:** Know what to do and where to go before poor visibility, smoke and flames cause panic and confusion.

**Talk With Your Fire Department:** Learn what to expect from your local fire department before the next wildfire approaches your community. Does your fire department participate in the Ready, Set, Go! Program? The Ready, Set, Go! Program is a preparedness program that works with citizens to ensure that everyone is ready for the next wildfire. This three-step process allows firefighters to teach homeowners how to create their own action plan, which includes getting their property wildfire ready before a fire threatens, getting set to leave their home, and understanding the role of evacuation in the community. The simple steps of the program are:

- **Ready — Be Ready, Be Firewise:** Take personal responsibility, and prepare long before the threat of a wildland fire so that your home is ready in case of fire. Create defensible space by clearing brush away from your home. Use fire-resistant landscaping, and harden your home with fire-safe construction measures. Assemble emergency supplies and belongings and put in a safe place. Plan escape routes, and make sure all those residing within the home know the plan of action.
- **Set — Situational Awareness:** Pack your vehicle with your emergency items. Stay aware of the latest news and information on the fire from local media, your local fire department, and public safety.
- **Go — Act Early!** Follow your personal wildland fire action plan. Doing so will not only support your safety, but will allow firefighters to best maneuver resources to combat the fire.

**Make It a Community Approach:** Learn the principles to improve your home's safety. Firefighters battle hundreds of wildfires every year, but they can't do it alone and can't be everywhere. Programs such as Firewise Communities/USA teach you how to use home safety principles through:

- Simple steps to reduce wildfire fuel surrounding homes.
- Plant and building material guidance for in and around homes.
- Resources to help neighbors come together to make Firewise changes communitywide.

### Additional Resources

- Fire-Adapted Communities: [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org).
- International Association of Fire Chiefs' Ready, Set, Go! Program: [www.wildlandfirersg.org](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org).
- National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program: [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).



The Ready, Set, Go! and Firewise Programs are two mitigation programs available.

For archived downloads, go to:

[www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/)



# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Your Role in Fire-Adapted Communities

No. CR-2014-7 April 30, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify how the fire service, local officials and the public can work together to establish a Fire-Adapted Community (FAC).

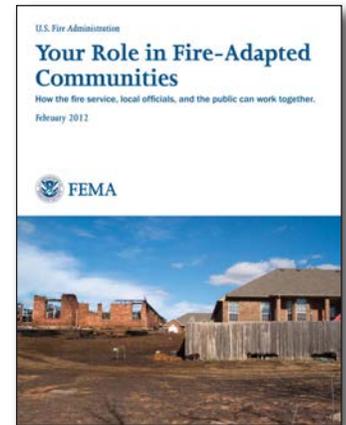
Homes near natural areas in the Wildland Urban Interface are beautiful places to live. These pristine environments add to the quality of life of residents and are valued by community leaders seeking to develop new areas of opportunity and local tax revenue, but these areas are not without risk. Fires are part of the natural ecology, and living adjacent to the wilderness means living with a constant threat of fires. Fire, by nature, is an unpredictable and often uncontrollable force. With proper communitywide preparation, human populations and infrastructure can withstand the devastating effects of a wildland fire, reducing loss of life and property. The goal depends on strong, collaborative partnerships between agencies and the public at the state, federal and local levels, with each accepting responsibility for their part.

The U.S. Fire Administration's publication, "Your Role in Fire-Adapted Communities," defines the FAC's concept and scope. The publication further defines the roles that groups can adopt to improve their safety and provide guidance for future actions. By becoming familiar with their role, identifying responsibilities, and implementing actions, communities will become better prepared to reduce their wildfire risk.

The FAC concept goes beyond defensible space techniques and preparedness. It incorporates components of how a community can coexist with wildland fire and, hopefully, reduce large fire threats and expensive fire suppression response. As the concept continues to evolve, the local fire service, local officials and decision-makers, and the public can take steps to better understand the role they play and responsibilities they should address.

- **Local Fire Service** — engage and educate residents about properly preparing for threats and building situational awareness. Firefighters can deliver the preparedness message to residents in an effective manner to best prepare them against wildland fire.
- **Local Officials and Decision-Makers** — elected council members, city managers and appointed municipal officials should all work to shape development in their communities and ensure an ideal quality of living. They promote the balance between the benefits of the environment in which they live and the risk posed by living there.
- **The Public** — should fully understand and prepare for the risk of wildland fire. Homes that are not properly prepared and maintained create a risk for the residents and the emergency services.

For more specific information on your role and responsibility in FACs, download the "Your Role in Fire-Adapted Communities" publication at [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).



For archived downloads, go to:

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# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Wildfire — Are You Prepared? (Part 1 of 2)

No. CR-2014-8 May 7, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify the steps necessary to prepare his or her home and its surroundings within the minimum safety zone.

**D**esign and landscape your home with wildfire safety in mind. Select materials and plants that can help contain fire rather than fuel it. Use fire-resistant or noncombustible materials on the roof and exterior structure of the dwelling, or treat wood or combustible material used in roofs, siding, decking or trim with fire-retardant chemicals evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory. Fire-resistant shrubs and trees should be planted around your home. For example, hardwood trees are less flammable than pine, evergreen, eucalyptus or fir trees. Specific tips include:



Graphic used with permission from the National Fire Protection Association Firewise Communities program.

### Prepare Your Home and Its Surroundings Within 100 Feet:

Within this area, you can take steps to reduce potential exposure to flames and radiant heat. Homes built in pine forests should have a minimum safety zone of 100 feet. If your home sits on a steep slope, standard protective measures may not suffice. Contact your local fire department or forestry office for additional information.

- Create a 100-foot safety zone around your home.
- Remove leaves, needles, and/or rubbish from gutters and under structures.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue.
- Review your homeowner's insurance policy, and also prepare/update a list of your home's contents.
- Select building materials and plants that resist fire.

### Protect Your Home:

- Post emergency phone numbers by every phone in your home.
- Inspect chimneys at least twice a year. Clean them at least once a year. Keep the dampers in good working order. Equip chimneys and stovepipes with a spark arrester that meets the requirements of National Fire Protection Association Standard 211, *Standard for Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents, and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances*. (Contact your local fire department for exact specifications.)
- Use 1/8-inch mesh screen beneath porches, decks, floor areas and the home itself. Also, check screen openings to floors, roof and attic.
- Install a dual-sensor smoke alarm on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms; test monthly and change the batteries at least once each year.
- Keep items close by that can be used as fire tools: a rake, ax, handsaw or chain saw, bucket, and shovel. You may need to fight small fires before emergency responders arrive.

### Additional Resources

- U.S. Fire Administration's Wildfire ... Are You Prepared? [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)
- Be Red Cross Ready: [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library).
- Ready.gov: [www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires).

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# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Wildfire — Are You Prepared? (Part 2 of 2)

No. CR-2014-9 May 14, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify the steps necessary to be prepared ahead of a wildfire threat and to practice wildfire safety.

If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening your area, listen for reports and evacuation information. Follow evacuation guidance provided by local officials. When wildfire threatens, you will not have time to shop or search for emergency supplies. Preassemble a disaster supply kit with items that you may need if advised to evacuate. Prepare ahead, and practice wildfire safety.

### Prepare Yourself and Family — Plan Ahead:

- Plan and practice two ways out of your neighborhood in case your primary route is blocked.
- Select a place for family members to meet outside your neighborhood in case you cannot get home or need to evacuate.
- Identify someone who is out of the area of contact if local phone lines are not working.
- Be ready to leave at a moment's notice.

### Emergency Supplies:

Assemble a disaster supply kit with items that you will need if advised to evacuate in advance. Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) for a current listing of supplies. At a minimum, include:

- Water — one gallon of water per person per day (three-day supply).
- Food — nonperishable, easy-to-prepare items (three-day supply).
- A first-aid kit.
- Medications, prescription medications and medical items.
- Emergency tools, including a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, flashlight and extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items.
- Special items for infants and elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of eyeglasses.
- Cellphone/Charger.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person.
- One blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- Family and emergency contact information.
- Copies of personal documents (medication list, pertinent medical information, birth certificates, deed/lease to home, insurance policies).
- Map(s) of the area.
- Other essential items that could not be replaced if they were destroyed.

### If Advised To Evacuate, Do So Immediately:

- Wear protective clothing — sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Take your disaster supply kit.
- Lock your home.
- Tell someone the time you left and where you are going.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

For additional information, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/).



Ready.gov is a national campaign designed to educate and empower individuals to prepare for and respond to all types of emergencies.

For archived downloads, go to:

[www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/)



## Protect What Matters (Part 1 of 2)

No. CR-2014-10 May 21, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will identify the preparedness actions that one can take to make home and property safer from wildfire.

**Family and Home:** You can increase your home's survival rate during a wildfire by making the right decisions now about landscaping and home construction. Making this positive impact doesn't need to cost a lot of money or time, just effort and commitment. Is your home ready for a wildfire? It is up to you to make sure it is. A wildfire is still a threat even if it's miles away. Traveling embers can ignite roofs, lawn chairs, decks, fences, mulch, pine needles and other common items around your house and yard. Cleaning your property of debris and maintaining your landscaping reduces the likelihood of ignition. Consider everyday preparedness actions to make your home and property safer from wildfire, such as creating a "fuel-free" area within 5 feet of your home's foundation, moving firewood stacks and propane tanks away from your house or shed, and disposing of lawn cuttings.

**Practice Wildfire Safety:** People start most wildfires. Find out how you can promote and practice wildfire safety.

- Contact your local fire department, health department or forestry office for information on fire laws.
- Make sure driveway entrances and your house number are clearly marked.
- Report hazardous conditions that could cause a wildfire.
- Teach children about fire safety. Keep matches out of their reach.
- Know when to dial 911 for emergency situations. Post emergency phone numbers by every phone in your home.
- Ensure adequate accessibility by large fire vehicles to your property.
- Plan two escape routes away from your home.
- Talk to your neighbors about wildfire safety. Work with your neighbors year-round to reduce fire risk.
- Consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as elderly or disabled people. Make plans to take care of children who may be on their own if parents can't get home.

Resources found at [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org) provide more thorough tips to identify your wildfire risk so you can be prepared. Also, contact your local fire department, state forestry personnel, or local landscaping groups for more specific information about techniques, materials, procedures and partnerships.

For additional information on wildland fire, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/wildland](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/wildland).

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## Protect What Matters (Part 2 of 2)

No. CR-2014-11 May 28, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to explain the importance of developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that is specific to his or her community's critical infrastructure and other risks

## NNeighborhood

Residents and the neighborhoods they live in are linked by their wildfire risk. If one home is inadequately prepared, the risk level to the entire neighborhood increases. Everyone's safety is impacted, including firefighters and emergency responders. Work with your neighbors and the local fire department to make your neighborhood more fire-adapted.

### Business and Infrastructure

Wildfires have far-reaching impacts and can damage highways, utilities, bridges, reservoirs and watersheds, agribusiness, ranching, timber operations, and community buildings. The economic and social impacts from damages include job loss, destroyed natural resources, burdensome rebuilding costs, and limited transportation options.

### Parks and Public Lands

Forests, parks, open spaces and public lands provide important recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, tourist attractions, water supply and timber resources for our communities. Fires that begin in these natural areas can spread to neighborhoods. Fire-Adapted Community (FAC) actions ensure the health and safety of these natural areas and lessen the impact of fire on nearby communities.

### Get Involved With Your Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Protecting business and infrastructure assets is essential to creating FACs. One of the best ways you can do this is by getting involved in the local CWPP. A CWPP is a collaborative plan created by the fire department, state and local forestry staff, land managers, community leaders, and the public. The planning process maps at-risk values, including community business and infrastructure vulnerable to wildfire. The plan requires actions to reduce risk, such as prescribed burning, fuel reduction, or other measures that adapt a community to fire. You can participate in other opportunities to address business and infrastructure through wildfire management plans, emergency management and response plans, and land use planning and regulations.

You can address wildfire issues in parks and public lands by including them in local CWPPs. The planning process maps at-risk values, including parks, watersheds, and other important land features. The plan requires recommendations to reduce risk, such as prescribed burning, cutting and removing brush and small trees, or other fuel mitigation measures. The public can also provide support to land management objectives by understanding the important ecological role that fire plays in maintaining forests and grasslands. You can participate in other opportunities to address wildfire issues on parks and public lands through open space management and natural resource conservation plans, forest management plans, land use planning and regulations, and working with state and local parks and recreation departments.

For further information about Wildland Urban Interface — Fire-Adapted Communities, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).

For archived downloads, go to:

[www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/)



# Coffee Break Training - Community Risk Reduction

## Know Your Role (Part 1 of 2)

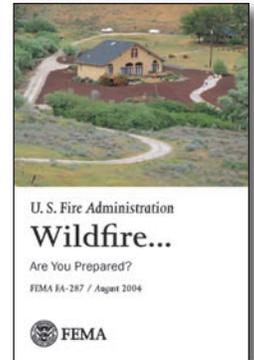
No. CR-2014-12 June 4, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will understand the role that community members have in mitigating the potential damage a wildfire can cause.

### Residents and Homeowners

Firefighters can't always protect every home from wildfire — especially if property owners haven't done their part to prepare. Property owners can take important steps around the home to make it safer for them, their family and their neighbors. Start now by setting an example and helping to create Fire-Adapted Communities (FACs) before the next fire approaches!

- Talk to the local fire department about how to prepare for a wildfire, situational awareness before a fire, when to evacuate, and what you and your community should expect during a response.
- Use the **Wildfire Home Assessment and Checklist** to conduct a risk assessment on your property.
- Create a plan to address issues in your property's home ignition zone/defensible space, including:
  - Maintaining a "fire-free" area around the perimeter of your home.
  - Managing vegetation along fences.
  - Clearing debris from decks, patios, eaves and porches.
  - Selecting proper landscaping and plants.
  - Knowing the local ecology and fire history.
  - Moving radiant heat sources away from the home (i.e., wood piles, fuel tanks, sheds).
  - Thinning trees and ladder fuels around the home.
- Develop a personal and family preparedness plan.
- Support land management agencies by learning about wildfire risk-reduction efforts, such as using prescribed fire to manage local landscapes.
- Contact the local planning/zoning office to find out if your home is in a high wildfire risk area and if there are specific local or county ordinances you should be following.
- If you have a homeowners' association, work with them to identify regulations that incorporate proven preparedness landscaping, home design, and building materials use, such as Firewise.



Publication provides tips for homeowners on what to do before and when wildfire threatens.

### Fire and Emergency Responders

Fire departments and emergency responders engage and educate residents about properly preparing for wildfire and building situational awareness. Studies show that you are uniquely qualified to prepare residents for wildfire because you are respected in your community and seen as a trusted source of information by the public. Use your role to help create FACs and do the following:

- Sign up for and participate in the Ready, Set, Go! Program.
- Do a local wildfire risk assessment for your community to identify high fuel loads, vulnerable building stock, and vulnerable populations.
- Provide input to the local Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- Ensure fire department's proficiency in wildland fires, fuels, operational techniques, safety procedures, qualifications, equipment and response.
- Review construction developments in the Wildland Urban Interface.
- Know availability of fire suppression resources and the public's expectation of response.
- Discuss current level of preparedness/response collaboration with local emergency management and public safety agencies.
- Promote role of secondary assets like Fire Corps or Community Emergency Response Teams.
- Build relationships with planning, zoning, and building code development and enforcement staff.

### Additional Resources

- U.S. Fire Administration's Wildfire ... Are You Prepared? at [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).
- Be Red Cross Ready: [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library).
- Ready.gov: [www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires).

For archived downloads, go to:

[www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/coffee-break/)



## Know Your Role (Part 2 of 2)

No. CR-2014-13 June 11, 2014

**Learning Objective:** The student will be able to explain the role that community members have in mitigating the potential damage that a wildfire can cause.

### Civic and Community Leaders

Local officials and decision-makers shape future development and help ensure quality of living. With more than 72,000 communities at risk of wildfire, it's important to keep your community safe and resilient by becoming fire-adapted.

- Support public education and wildland fire preparedness programs, such as Ready, Set, Go! and Firewise.
- Ensure that residential and commercial developers understand the community's wildfire risks.
- Include a wildfire risk map in the comprehensive plan, and implement regulations for high-risk areas that require defensible space measures, fire-resistant building materials, and firefighter access.
- Work with land managers, fire departments, state forestry agencies and the public on a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).
- Dedicate material and financial resources to community mitigation efforts.
- Support volunteer organizations that are involved in wildfire mitigation efforts.



Castle Rock Fire, Ketchum, Idaho, in 2007 — briefing for citizens, Incident Management Teams and firefighters. (Firepix: [http://www.nifc.gov/wildlandPhotos/wildlandPhotos\\_main.html](http://www.nifc.gov/wildlandPhotos/wildlandPhotos_main.html))

### Forest and Land Managers

Land management and wildfires are closely related. Ranching, farming, timber and logging operations, species management, and development can impact wildfire risk. As a public or private land manager, you can help create Fire-Adapted Communities (FACs).

- Do a risk assessment, fire management plan or forest action plan to address wildfire risk on the land you manage, and share that information with local suppression authorities and in the local CWPP.
- Talk to other land managers in the community to gain mutual understanding of land uses and management goals and strategies.
- Know the economic factors of your community's land uses and how wildfire damages will affect the market.
- Understand local and state protocols for prescribed fire.
- Inform fire departments about when fires can be left to burn for the natural cycle.
- Understand existing comprehensive planning, zoning ordinances, urban/suburban parks, and recreational land planning and urban forest initiatives.
- Determine expectations of out-of-state land managers and their understanding of local risks and resources.

Wildfire is everyone's responsibility. An FAC means that homeowners, firefighters, land managers and civic leaders have done their part to prepare for the next wildfire.

For additional information, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/wildland](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/wildland).

In addition, an applied research project submitted as part of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program on Effective Emergency Notification to the Residents, dated 2008, can be found at [www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo42136.pdf](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo42136.pdf).

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