

# 6 STEPS TO BECOME A FIREWISE COMMUNITY

Firewise® is a national program adopted by the RI DFE Forest Fire Program to help residents protect their property and neighborhood from an uncontrolled wildfire front. Follow these steps to become a Nationally Recognized Firewise® Community and be prepared, before a wildfire disaster happens.

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- 1 Initial contact**

Meet with the DFE Firewise specialist to discuss wildfire hazards in your community and how the Firewise program can help mitigate wildfire risk. Members of the community who should be included in the discussion and the process:

  - 🔥 Homeowner's, Residential and Commercial Property owners
  - 🔥 Fire professional's, EMA, Urban Forester, Planning and Development
  - 🔥 Local Representatives
  - 🔥 Other key community leaders
- 2 Stakeholder meetings**

Form a "Community Firewise Committee" of interested community members, municipal staff and fire departments. Meetings will be held throughout the Assessment and Planning stages. Led by the community, assistance will be provided by the DFE Firewise specialist.
- 3 Wildfire Risk Assessment**

DFE Firewise specialist explains the assessment options and identifies how DFE can assist and what resources the community must provide (time, materials, volunteers):

  - a) Level 1 Assessment – **contact your DFE Firewise Specialist for access**  
Online Digital Aerial Photo interpretation locating all homes in the community and rating homes 1-5 based on proximity to trees and other visible risk factors. *Can be done by: Fire Department, community staff, high school students, Eagle Scout project, contractor, etc.*
  - b) Level 2 Assessment  
House-by-house field assessment. A cumulative rating determines if any wildfire risk mitigation strategies are needed. The entire community may be done if resources allow, or following a Level 1 Assessment, identifying areas of where mitigation may be needed (e.g., access improvements, structure modification, site modification).
- 4 Plan development**

Completed by the Community Firewise Committee, through a series of meetings, with assistance and input from DFE Firewise specialist. Invite homeowners to inform and gain their input. Prioritize risk reduction projects to be completed annually.

  - 🔥 Review Wildfire Risk Assessment
  - 🔥 Determine risk areas in the community.)
  - 🔥 Decide which actions need to be taken to mitigate risk.
  - 🔥 Decide how to get the information to the community/public.
- 5 Implementation**

Based on final review of the Community Wildfire Risk Assessment implement recommended actions.

  - 🔥 Maintain Community involvement through public outreach
  - 🔥 Keep evaluating and refining the plan as needed
- 6 Evaluation & Reporting**

All involved stakeholders should meet periodically as plan is implemented.

  - 🔥 Develop a monitoring system to measure progress and recommend changes
  - 🔥 Submit yearly reports to Firewise USA for documentation using the [portal](#).

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## Annual Requirements

1. **Educational Outreach** – hold at least one wildfire risk reduction outreach event.
2. **Wildfire Risk Reduction Investment** – One volunteer hour/household in the community invested in wildfire risk reduction.
3. **Application** – Create a Recognized Firewise USA Community profile at: [Portal.firewise.org](http://Portal.firewise.org)