

# Practical Reminders for LACC Wildland Fire Protection



*This is our fourth year of being a Firewise Community. I am often asked “why do we need to fill out the LACC Property Owners Time and Expense Form?” The answer is that we need to show our annual clean-up efforts in order to maintain our Firewise Community designation. It was quite evident that we are doing a good job on these efforts when we attended the 2nd Annual Spring Plumas County Firewise Coordinators Meeting at the Quincy Library March 14, 2017. Committee members Bob and Barbara MacArthur, Tom Ortez, Cliff Shelton represented Lake Almanor Country Club. But it was also evident that other communities are doing many other programs to quantify the threats to their communities and to find funds to mitigate them. Programs include thinning forests by “shaded fuel breaks”, right-of-way clean-ups to maintain evacuation routes, lot trimming and chipping, dead tree mapping and condition assessments on a community-wide basis. We will continue our meeting attendance to find ideas and opportunities for LACC. Barbara MacArthur, Firewise Chairperson (v. FireNews17\_5)*

Homeowners can and must take primary responsibility for wildfire safety action around the home. According to fire science research, individual efforts do make a difference even in the face of a catastrophic wildfire.

There are not enough fire fighting resources to protect every house during severe wildfires, and with

limited budgets it means we need to do more with less. Fire fighters



are trained to safely and efficiently suppress wildland fires. **Safely** and **efficiently** are the key words to their jobs.

## Safely

In a severe wildland fire, fire fighters are **trained to find safe areas** from which to work in order to increase their chances of saving a home or a life.

If you were a fire fighter, from which place would you pick to safely fight a fire: a lot that has well-maintained defensible spaces **versus** a lot with overly dense tree stands with limbs to the ground and flammable brush under/around those tree limbs?



Another choice: a lot with cleared space around the home which has ignition-resistant construction **versus** a lot with brush and trees, firewood, and/or dry, wooden decks next to the house? Keep in mind; fire fighters may pass by your house if it is in an un-safe defensive position.

## Efficiently

The duties of fire fighters require them to be deliberate, orderly and as efficient as practicable in preparing to fight a fire. But their effectiveness is reduced when they must sweep decks, move wood piles and flammable patio items while trying to fight the fire.



## Firewise Reminders

Members can do much to help fire fighters (and maybe neighbors) safely and efficiently work in a wildland fire:

- Prune low hanging limbs to reduce ladder fuels
- Clean roofs and gutters of pine needles and dead leaves
- Keep flammable plants and mulches at least 5 feet away from your home’s perimeter
- Use low-growing, well pruned and fire-resistive plants around home
- Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire screening no larger than 1/8-inch mesh
- Sweep decks and porches clear of fallen leaves
- Move woodpiles away from the home during non-winter months
- Bring doormats and furniture cushions inside when an area is threatened by a wildfire
- Close garage doors when leaving your home in the event of an evacuation.

## Sources:

1. A Guide to Firewise Principles, inside the **FIREWISE TOOLKIT** [Get Article Here](#)
2. Firewise video: Urban Legends, Part 2 Myths and Truths Put to the Test on 11/17/16 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YN6bf1FJ1g>)

**NEXT MONTH:** *Sierra Forests Threatened*