



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS



TN

Department of
Agriculture | Forestry

Tennessee Fire Adapted Communities Desk Reference

April 2024



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Fire Adapted Communities	4
Fire Adapted Community Concept	4
Agency Emergency Response	5
Evacuation Planning-Internal Safety Zones	5
Fuel Breaks and Land Management	6
Codes and Ordinances	6
Prevention Education	7
Wildfire Risk Reduction and Programs	7
Hazard Mitigation Program Grant Information and Guidance	13

Appendices

- A. Hazard Mitigation Grant Application for Assistance
- B. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Template
- C. Other Hazard Mitigation Grant Opportunities
- D. Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (SouthWRAP)
- E. Division of Forestry Contacts
- F. Helpful Publications and Useful Web Links

Introduction

Fire has been a part of the landscape in Tennessee throughout history. Fires in the Southeast during pre-historic times often began from lightning and most experts believe that they were usually associated with thunderstorms and were quickly rained out, as they are today. However, when rain did not put them out, they spread for days, weeks or even months until natural barriers, such as rivers, rocky terrain, or precipitation stopped them. Under drought and windy conditions, sometimes even natural barriers or changes in fuel structure did not stop fire's spread. Fires that have been allowed to burn naturally in Tennessee have demonstrated that they can survive repeated rains and burn many acres between the rain events. These early fires burned with enough frequency to develop and sustain vast grasslands and open woodlands, with large, widely spaced trees, across Tennessee. Remnants of these grasslands still remain.

Later when the land became inhabited, the occupants (first Native Americans, then European settlers) used fire as a tool. Fire was used to maintain grass habitats for wildlife to make hunting easier, to keep woodlands open for easier travel, and to remove unwanted vegetation near villages for easier farming and better visibility.

Fire can be a very beneficial tool on a landscape, but where homes and communities are in wildfire prone areas, it becomes very challenging and be very destructive. Fire professionals call the situation where buildings are built near or among these areas the **wildland urban interface (WUI)**. The WUI is determined by the type and distribution of vegetation, combustibility of buildings and their proximity to vegetation and other structures, climate and weather patterns, fire history, topography, and other landscape features.

Wildfires are a natural part of the landscape and will continue to occur. Wildfire preparedness is essential to community safety and requires participation from everyone – residents, homeowners, business owners, land managers, utility companies, fire departments, community leaders, emergency managers, fire responders, insurance providers, wildland fire specialists, government officials and more. In short, everyone is encouraged to learn their role and take an active part in helping their community better adapt to threats of wildland fire.

Fire Adapted Communities (FAC)

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry has been a proponent of wildfire risk reduction programs throughout its history. The Division has partnered with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and its Federal Partners to promote the Firewise USA program since 2002.

The Division actively promotes **Fire Adapted Communities (FAC)**, in which a multitude of programs and concepts work hand in hand to increase community wildfire safety.



Fire Adapted Community Concept

A **fire adapted community** accepts fire as part of the natural landscape. The community understands its fire risk and takes action before, during and after a wildfire to minimize harm to residents, homes, businesses, parks, utilities, and other community assets. These collective actions empower all residents and other stakeholders to be safer in their environment. The graphic below shows many elements of the concept. The elements have been evolving and changing over time...just like a community needs to adapt over time. A community using the FAC concept may not have to address all elements shown in the graphic, however, it is important for a community to consider how important all elements are to the community. In a way, you can consider the elements of the graphic as an evolving checklist for the community to consider.



Components of a Fire Adapted Community: Fire Adapted Communities Toolbox

Agency Emergency Response

Incident Response Capabilities and Cooperative Fire Agreements

In a community, the Identification of a fire department's response capabilities defining personnel numbers and functions, equipment numbers and types, water sources, communications, support needs, and availability will enhance its efficiency. Acknowledging a department's strengths and challenges will allow it to work with neighboring partners in the public and private sectors to effectively develop cooperative agreements in which response agencies identify and share resources when needed.

An effective initial response starts with being prepared to make it. Minimizing wildfire ignition potential and managing evacuation preparedness begins by having an effective fire danger monitoring program. Only with an accurate, agreed upon fire danger monitoring program with its associated "Step-up" plan can fire departments and fire managers be confident that coordinated preparedness actions are being taken for initial attack, managing fire prevention actions, and preparing for evacuations.

In an emergency, pre-identification of both tactical and logistical resources required for assistance and partners who can provide these resources will increase efficiency and competent decision making. A documented plan between all participating response and support agencies will reduce confusion and stress during the chaos of an incident when decisions are needed in a timely manner. Having a pre-determined **Action Plan** will help assure good decisions are made to enhance the safety of all affected parties.

Certainly, one of the best ways to mitigate this confusion, stress and inefficiencies is to have interagency practice exercises to test the pre-determined Action Plan. Actual incidents also serve as a test of the Action Plan. It is best to find out its shortcomings during an exercise rather than in the middle of an on-going fire.

The Tennessee Division of Forestry (TDF) provides wildland fire suppression resources and support to multiple partner agencies and the public. The TDF supplies ground-based equipment and can arrange for additional resources from outside the local area and outside the state if required. The Division of Forestry can place requests for national aviation assets, ground based equipment, logistical and incident management team support as needed. The Division also provides grants for wildland firefighting supplies to fire departments through the

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program and firefighting equipment through the **Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP)** and **Firefighter Property (FFP)** Programs.

Evacuation Planning – Internal Safety Zones

Understanding the difficulty and timelines necessary to advise a community to evacuate their homes needs to be carefully considered and planned out in advance of a disaster. Waiting too long to implement a community wide evacuation is almost always a disaster. Trigger points to determine when actions need implemented should to be pre-identified and agreed on by all agencies, especially law enforcement and fire. Some of these trigger points may exist even before a wildfire ignites. For example, under extreme drought conditions, coupled with a warm, dry, high wind forecast, it may be necessary to begin preparing the public for wildfire many hours in advance of the first inevitable wildfire started by sources such as downed powerlines. In addition, one of the best sets of trigger points for actions related to prevention, preparedness for initial attack and potential evacuation challenges is accurate fire danger ratings.

Planning should also include support agencies and non-profit organizations such as the American Red Cross, Health and Human Services, and Animal Control. Community leadership should be involved in the planning, and these plans should be shared with all residents especially travel routes and notification procedures. Successful evacuations occur when there is a collaborative effort by all parties.

Internal Safety Zones can be constructed and identified within a community for citizens to take refuge when evacuation is not practical or safe. An internal safety zone is an area free of flammable materials where people can wait for a wildfire to pass without having to take any extraordinary measures for safety. It is essential for a community to enlist the aid of wildfire experts when planning and developing internal safety zones.

Fuel Breaks and Land Management

Communities working with its partners or land management agencies can work together to strategically construct fuel breaks. A **fuel break** is a natural or manmade change in fuel characteristics which affects fire behavior so that fires burning into them can be more readily

controlled. Often the placement of effective fuel breaks may need to be on neighboring property, underscoring the need to work with neighboring landowners prior to wildfire event.

Fuel breaks are often more efficient when other fuel treatments such as prescribed fire or other forms of fuel removal are used together.

Land management plans will need to be adapted to allow the construction of these breaks and supporting fuel manipulations. Communities are encouraged to work with cooperators and partner agencies in developing strategies to aid in working through potential issues, such as considering fuel treatments, such as prescribed fire, that adjoin other properties.

Codes and Ordinances

Building codes and **ordinances** can be utilized to encourage or require fire resistant Community design, building construction and landscaping practices. If codes and ordinances are developed with stakeholder input and implemented over a reasonable number of years, communities can be made safer without undue hardship to landowners, developers, and builders.

The **Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS)** completed a study comparing new home ignition resistant construction vs. retrofitting existing structures and found that it was substantially less expensive to be “safer from the start.” More information is available on the IBHS website: disastersafety.org. In addition, the **National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)** produced a video chronicling fire risk reduction practices being incorporated at the onset of construction, which can be viewed at [Safer From the Start: Developing a Firewise Community](#).

In many instances, only minimum mitigation efforts may be necessary. For example, with older homes, converting existing roofs to Class A non-flammable shingles, screening in vents and crawl spaces with metal screening and creating a 5-foot non-flammable zone around the home will greatly reduce wildfire risk.

Prevention Education

Wildfire prevention and educating the public is a core mission of the Division of Forestry. The Division utilizes many different methods to promote fire prevention, including the development of fire prevention materials and promoting fire prevention activities with communities and organizations. The Division of Forestry utilizes its website and various forms of social media to promote wildfire prevention.

Debris burning is a major source of wildland fires throughout Tennessee. Understanding and complying with State or local debris burning regulations will greatly reduce the risk of escaped burns which may threaten or destroy property. From October 15 through May 15, anyone starting an open-air fire within 500 feet of a forest, grassland, or woodland must by law secure a burning permit from the Division of Forestry. More information on obtaining a permit or additional prevention information can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/tnwildlandfire>.

Wildfire Risk Reduction Programs

Ready, Set Go!

The **Ready, Set, Go! (RSG!) Program**, managed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), seeks to develop and improve the dialogue between fire departments and the residents they serve. Launched nationally in March 2011 at the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI 2011) Conference, the program helps fire departments to teach individuals who live in high risk wildfire areas – and the wildland-urban interface – how to best prepare themselves and their properties against fire threats. Emergency evacuation preparedness is a very important element of the program. For more information visit [Ready, Set, Go!](#).



Firewise USA®

The **Firewise USA®** program provides a collaborative framework for neighbors to reduce wildfire risks at the local level. The national recognition program's annual criteria is designed to empower and engage residents living in wildfire prone areas with a plan and actions that can increase their home's chances of surviving a wildfire, while also making it safer for firefighters.

TDF has developed a State-wide Fire Adapted Communities program that is approved by the State Forester. This state-wide program utilizes the Firewise USA® recognition program and science based wildfire risk reduction principles to promote wildfire resilience within communities.



Firewise USA® is a unique opportunity available to America's fire-prone communities. Its goal is to encourage and acknowledge action that minimizes home loss to wildfire. It teaches you to prepare for a wildfire before it occurs. Firewise USA® is easily adapted to different locales. It works in the following way:

- Wildland fire staff from federal, state or local agencies provide a community with information about coexisting with wildfire along with mitigation information tailored to that specific area.
- Working with the local fire department and TDF, the community assesses its risk and creates its own network of cooperating homeowners, agencies and organizations.
- Again, working with the local fire department and TDF, a collaborative action plan is developed to minimize identified risks.

Why become a recognized Firewise USA® Community?

- 1) Wildfires BURN structures in Tennessee every year! It is homeowners and the community's responsibility to protect itself from wildfire. Assistance is available, but only the community can commit to becoming fire resilient.
- 2) Employing risk reduction activities will increase the safety of home, yourself, your family, your pets and other possessions.
- 3) Reducing fuels and creating some defensible space around your home will provide firefighters a better chance to defend your home from a wildfire.
- 4) Fire resistant homes and landscaping will allow fire fighters to concentrate efforts on wildfire perimeter control reducing the overall risk to the community(ies).
- 5) Communities are much safer having a community-wide program. Firefighters MUST be able to enter and exit a community SAFELY during wildfires. One point with too much brush that is too close to the road, or roads too steep, narrow or curvy may stop firefighters from getting to homes in need of protection.
- 6) Communities become a member of a national network of communities that will provide you with a monthly newsletter with the latest information to make your community safer! In addition to the newsletter, you will receive occasional notices when new brochures, flyers, fact sheets are released by various entities. The program renewal standards provide an incentive for the community to stay engaged annually, and over the long term by having to keep their Community Assessment and CWPP current. Keeping residents engaged over

the long term is challenging for community leadership. All the things mentioned previously helps the community leaders to keep residents motivate to stay engaged in reducing ignition potential of structures.

- 7) While working to become a Firewise USA® recognized community and developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, communities have increased status when requesting grant funding. Funding may be available for paying for things such as fuel reduction projects, improving water sources, and improving road signage. For more information on grant programs, see "Hazard Mitigation Program Grant Information and Guidance" (page 13).
- 8) Hazard Risk Reduction participation can help with a homeowner's insurance coverage. Ready,Set,Go!, Firewise USA® and other wildfire hazard reduction and education programs can help improve your Fire Departments ISO rating, which can lead to additional homeowner insurance benefits.
- 9) Community wildfire hazard problems such as hazardous vegetation in common areas, substandard road signage, lack of water sources, narrow roads, etc., these are examples of challenges that must be identified and a plan developed to mitigate them. The Firewise USA® process is a proven method to identify the problems and to develop a plan to lessen them, as much as possible. The Division of Forestry will provide support and assistance to a community in meeting its wildfire safety goals at NO MONETARY COST.

Firewise USA® Process

Step 1: Contact the Tennessee Division of Forestry (TDF)

Becoming recognized a Firewise USA® Site begins with the community itself when it contacts a local Division of Forestry office to express interest in the program.

Step 2: Site Visit

A TDF representative will make a site visit to get a general overview of the community. This first visit is simply a general inspection to see if the community meets the program's basic criteria of being at risk from wildfire. It should be noted that the Division of Forestry has yet to be invited to a community where there had not been a need for wildfire risk reduction! So, don't hesitate to give us a call. Contact your local Forestry Office or one of TDF's Wildfire Mitigation Specialists. For the Cumberland Plateau west, contact Michael Durfee at mdurfeewildlandfire@gmail.com. In the eastern portion of the state, contact Joshua Russell at jrussellsound@gmail.com, Rick Brown at usranger1104@gmail.com, Leon Konz at leon.konz@gmail.com or Tom Simpson at thomas.simpson@tn.gov. These Wildfire Mitigation Specialists also serve as community advisors. Local Area Foresters may serve as community advisors and points of contact as well.

Step 3: Organize a Committee

Community representatives now can create a multi-discipline **Fire Adapted Community (FAC) Committee**. This Committee must be viewed as a permanent addition to the community, if the hazard reduction program is expected to continue indefinitely. In addition to homeowners, members may include the local fire department, planners, insurance agents, emergency managers, land developers, architects, builders, civic organizations, elected officials, local legislators, bankers, and other interest parties. Committee members should be advised that the recognition process may take six months or more. A TDF representative will serve as an Advisor to the FAC Committee. And, if the local fire department is not a member of the Committee, they must serve as an advisor to ensure that the needed facts are considered in the evaluation and eventual mitigation plan.

Step 4: Evaluation of the Community

The next step is for the Committee to get their community evaluated for its ability to withstand a wildfire. This evaluation includes collecting information on the homes, surrounding fuels, and the community's infrastructure such as water sources, road characteristics, fire suppression

capabilities, etc. This evaluation is best completed by community members, structural fire personnel and wildland fire personnel working together. While not mandatory, the Division of Forestry usually facilitates this evaluation/meeting. The [Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal \(SouthWRAP\)](#) featuring the **Community Assessor for the South** tool is utilized to assist with assessing risk and it is available to communities through TDF. The TDF advisor will be able to assist your community with utilizing this tool. More information about SouthWRAP is found in **Appendix D**.

In addition to community-wide evaluation, individual homes should also be assessed. These assessments can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including by community members, volunteer fire departments, TDF employees, contractors, and other volunteers. TDF will provide all of the assessment training necessary for volunteer assessors to feel comfortable that their work will be high-quality. The best way to get the job done varies from community to community.

Step 5: Develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

The Committee works with wildland and structural fire representatives to complete the CWPP. **A collaborative plan created by the fire department, state and local forestry staff, nearby federal land managers, community leaders, and the public.** Your CWPP should be used to identify high-risk WUI areas — where homes and businesses meet forests and fields. The plan also can serve as an opportunity to target potential hazard fuel reduction projects, structure ignition concerns, training needs and prevention strategies, and other issues related to fire protection.

As you work to complete the CWPP you may find that certain FAC elements do not apply to your community; it is permissible to skip those sections. By the time you complete the plan, you will have listed the identified risk reduction projects in priority order with target completion dates. The Firewise USA® Recognition Program mandates one of the solutions to be an annual community Education or Clean-up Day. Also, if the home assessments have not been completed by the time the CWPP is written, it is recommended that continuing with assessments be made one of the projects in the Action Plan. A sample CWPP is found in **Appendix B**.

Step 6: Apply for Recognition

Once the CWPP has been approved, the community can submit the application to become “Recognized” in the Firewise USA program. The application is completed on-line through the [Firewise USA® Portal](#). Your Division of Forestry advisor is available to assist with this process.

Step 7: Implement the Plan

The CWPP will establish the community's "Action Plan" with project priorities and target completion dates. It is the responsibility of the Hazard Mitigation Committee to oversee the Plan's implementation. Additionally, it is reasonable for the Hazard Mitigation Committee to apply for a grant from TDF to help defray implementation costs (contingent on available funds).

Step 8: Renewing your recognition status

Recognition renewal is completed annually by submitting documentation into the Firewise USA computer portal to demonstrate continued community participation into the program. Renewals can be processed at any time of year; however, the deadline is no later than November 15. Renewals must be completed on-line which can be located on the Firewise USA® website, Firewise USA® Portal. If you have questions or need assistance, contact your local TDF point of contact. Specific requirements for new community recognition and for community renewal can be found on the NFPA Firewise USA® website at <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>

Hazard Mitigation Program Grant Information and Guidance

TDF can assist communities with their Fire Adapted Communities program with grant funding. TDF offers three types of grants to assist communities with their FAC program. They are "Start-up", "Community Education" and "Hazard Mitigation Assistance". Each is described in detail below.

Importantly, these grant dollars are for the sole purpose of benefiting the community's FAC risk reduction program. Under no circumstances are the funds, equipment or materials purchased to be used for personal reasons other than what would benefit the community. The funds, and benefits of the funds, cannot be used for what may be considered non-FAC personal gain. The community leader registered with TDF as the community liaison is obligated to consult with the local Area Forester if there is a questionable use of funds, equipment, materials, or other benefits related to the TDF Hazard Mitigation Program.

It is also incumbent upon the community's Board of Directors, or other entity responsible for managing the community, to establish a program to manage equipment and materials purchased with grant funds. The program must be set up in a way safe use, maintenance and TDF policies are taken into account.

Failure to manage the grant dollars according to TDF policy may result in loss of the privilege to apply for TDF grants of any kind in the future.

As mentioned previously, TDF offers three types of grants to assist communities with their FAC program:

Start-up Grant: As a community begins developing their FAC program, they are eligible to apply for a Start-up Grant of up to \$1,000. A completed CWPP is not required. In fact, the intent of this grant is to help communities defer the costs of education, outreach, planning, and field work associated with developing a CWPP. On the ground mitigation activities are not covered in this grant. This Start-up Grant can be applied for any time of the year (the other two types of grants can only be applied for during the “grant application open season” which is typically in fall).

Community Education Grant: This grant can be applied for by any community with an approved CWPP and current action plan. The maximum value of this grant is \$500 dollars per year. These grant funds are to be utilized to support community education events/projects and can be used for mailings, copying, printing, refreshments, and participation prizes. Unlike, a Hazard Assistance Grant, **this grant is NOT competitive.** It is not competitive to ensure ALL communities have access to some funding each year to nurture their program over the long-term. Communities cannot receive both an Education Grant AND a Hazard Assistance grant in the same year. So, if education and hazard mitigation funding are both needed, the community must roll all the needs into one Hazard Mitigation Grant not to exceed \$10,000.

It is important to remember that the Start-up Grant can only be used for CWPP development-education, outreach, and planning, and the community education grant can only be used for community education and outreach. **Neither of these two grants can be used to fund mitigation projects.**

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant: Once the CWPP is approved, a community may apply for a hazard mitigation assistance program grant of up to \$20,000 the first time to implement mitigation activities/items identified in the Action Plan. In following years additional grants of this type can be submitted annually, with a maximum allowable of \$10,000 per calendar year. The use of the Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant is to be used for projects/goods/services identified in the approved CWPP and must meet the intent of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy. Examples of “Eligible and Ineligible” uses for hazard mitigation

program funds are listed below. The TDF can provide direction as needed. A copy of the “Hazard Mitigation Program: Application for Assistance” is in **Appendix A**.

For all three of these grants, a completed application is to be submitted to the local Assistant District Forester for review. Your local Hazard Mitigation Specialist or TDF contact can assist with this process. Merits of grant applications will be decided upon by the Assistant District Forester (ADF) and the reviewing officials in the Nashville Office.

Communities will be eligible to apply for assistance and education grant funding during a designated time each year as established by TDF- usually occurring in late summer. A grant announcement will be posted on <https://www.tn.gov/twildlandfire> announcing these dates. Plus, the FAC Program Leader will send a message to all FAC Community Leaders.

Communities will be eligible to apply for HMG and CEG funding during a designated time each year as established by the Division of Forestry. A grant announcement will be posted on <https://www.tn.gov/twildlandfire> announcing these dates.

TDF has contracted with the Appalachian RC and D Council (ARC&D) for the administration and management of the hazard mitigation grant program. The Division reviews and approves all applications for grant assistance and makes recommendations to the ARC&D for approved community grant expenditures. Communities will be required to sign an agreement with the ARC&D to make authorized expenditures. The ARC&D will then provide the community with written guidelines on how to make expenditures/purchases and submit for reimbursement. Both the community and ARC&D are responsible for tracking costs.

Grant announcements will generally be posted the first of July and the application period running from the first of August through mid-September. Specific information will be posted annually on <https://www.tn.gov/twildlandfire>.

Examples of Eligible Uses for Hazard Mitigation Funds

- Creating defensible spaces around communities, homes and structures
- Developing, creating, and/or maintaining fuel breaks
- Conducting fuels reduction beyond defensible space adjacent to WUI areas
- Purchasing equipment such as chain saws, blowers, mowers, bush hog, to assist with fuel reduction, including related safety equipment such as chaps, goggles, hearing, and face protection.
- Removal of slash including piling and burning, mulching, grinding, etc.
- Conducting mechanical fuel reduction
- Maintaining Vegetation management (pruning, mowing, chemical treatment, grazing)

- Thinning of trees and larger vegetation
- Providing Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities or similar programs outreach to WUI communities and homeowners
- Developing pamphlets, brochures, handouts, PSAs and videos relating to Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities Programs
- Obtaining technical assistance as it relates to mitigation and hazardous fuels reduction activities.
- Conducting information and education, awareness, Firewise, Ready Set Go!, and Fire Prevention Programs
- Fire resistant signs, posts, and installation costs to identify roads, residences and emergency exits.
- Cost of installing “dry hydrants.”
- Leasing or contracting equipment and other resources to complete an eligible project.
- Creation/development and implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)
- Updates of CWPPs
- Items not on this list but approved by the Division of Forestry

Ineligible Uses for Hazard Mitigation Funds

- Research and development projects
- Capital improvement projects including construction/infrastructure (building remodel, bridges, road construction, gates and water development)
- Economic development projects
- Training for suppression capacity building
- Preparedness and suppression capacity building such as purchase of fire department equipment.
- Small business start-up funding
- Legal fees
- Salary or equipment costs of regular community employees
- Equipment exceeding \$5,000 in cost.
- Any other project/item outside the intent of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy as interpreted by TDF.

**TENNESSEE FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE**

COMMUNITY: _____ **DATE:** _____

CONTACT: _____ **TITLE:** _____

ADDRESS: _____ **CITY:** _____

ZIP CODE: _____ **COUNTY:** _____

PHONE: _____ **FAX:** _____

GRANT TYPE (CIRCLE ONE): **START UP** **HAZARD MITIGATION** **PUBLIC EDUCATION/PREVENTION**

The Intent and purpose of the any funds awarded are specific to the grant type applied for are not interchangeable.

PROJECT NARRATIVE: Give a brief explanation of the intended use of the above listed materials/supplies/services and what the benefits will be.

APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE: List tools, materials, and or services along with the cost of the items your community intends to purchase with grant funds. Any change from the items listed below must be requested in writing to the Division of Forestry and RC and D Council prior to purchase.

<u>Materials/Supplies/Educational Events</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(Use additional sheets if needed)

Total:

Has an Assessment and Evaluation been completed? _____ If so, provide date and score: _____

- Is Community Wildfire Protection Plan's "Action Plan" completed? _____ If so, provide date: _____
- Number of homes and other structures at risk from wildfire: _____

Signature and Title of Community Representative

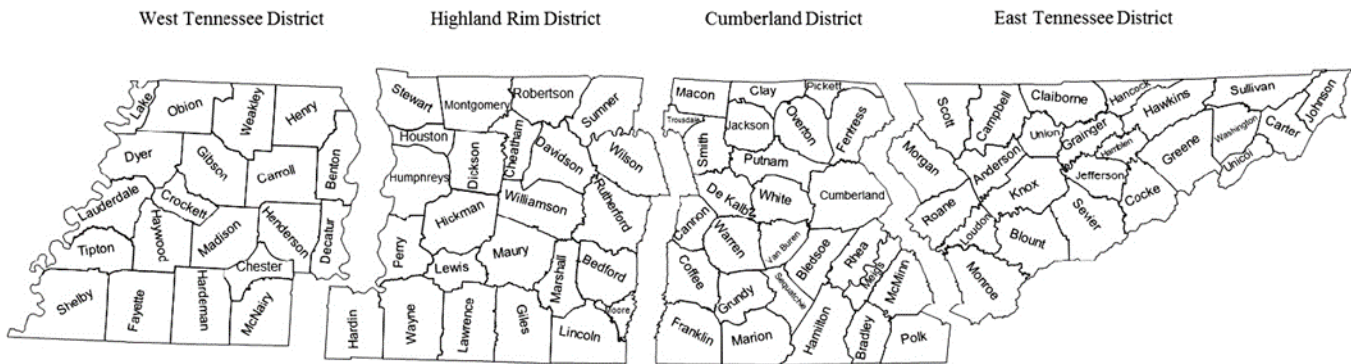
Date

Email address of Community Representative

Federal EIN (if applicable)

**PLEASE SEND YOUR HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE APPLICATION TO THE FOLLOWING
DIVISION OF FORESTRY ASSISTANT DISTRICT FORESTER IN YOUR AREA**

Application package must be received by your local Assistant District Forester by



East Tennessee District

Nathan Waters, Assistant District Forester
2416 Fletcher Luck Lane
Knoxville, TN 37996
Office: 865-594-6432
Fax: 865-594-8907
Email: nathan.waters@tn.gov

Cumberland District

Joel Blackburn, Assistant District Forester
929 West Jackson Street, Suite C
Cookeville, TN 38501
Office: 931-526-9502
Fax: 931-526-2279
Email: joel.blackburn@tn.gov

Highland Rim District

Michael Holder, Assistant District Forester
3497 Church Street
Burns, TN 37029
Office: 615-797-3117
Fax: 615-797-3113
Email: michael.holder@tn.gov

West Tennessee District

Ryan Morris, Assistant District Forester
172 Eastern Shores Drive
Lexington, TN 38351
Office: 731-967-6607
Fax: 731-968-5356
Email: ryan.j.morris@tn.gov

The

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

AN ACTION PLAN FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION

DATE:

Prepared by:

Organization: Tennessee Division of Forestry Contact Information:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

The following report is a cooperative effort between various entities. The representatives listed below comprise the core decision-making team responsible for this report and mutually agree on the plan's contents.

Community Representative(s):

1.) Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

2.) Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

3.) Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

4.) Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Local Fire Department Representative(s):

1.) Name:

2.) Name:

Address:

Address:

Phone:

Phone:

E-mail:

E-mail:

Local Tennessee Division of Forestry Representative(s):

1.) Name:

2.) Name:

Address:

Address:

Phone:

Phone:

E-mail:

E-mail:

The following parties were also involved in the preparation of this report:

1.) Name:

Phone:

Organization:

E-mail:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

2.) Name:

Organization:

Address:

PLAN CONTENTS

1. Community Background and Existing Situation
2. Community Base Map and Other Visuals
3. Goals and Objectives
4. Prioritized Mitigation Recommendations
5. Action Plan
6. Wildfire Pre-Suppression Plan
7. Additional Comments
8. Attachments

1) COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND EXISTING SITUATION

Community Description:

County:

Latitude/Longitude:

Frontage Road:

Nearest Intersection:

Nearest Fire Department:

Name:

Location:

Year Established:

Interface Areas:

Community Size:

Number of Lots:

Number of Structures:

Estimated Acres:

Development Status:

Community Infrastructure:

Homeowners Association/Organization: Yes or No

Contacts:

1.) Name:

2.) Name:

Address:

Address:

Phone Number:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Email Address:

Resident Population:

_____ Full-time (check if 100%)

_____ Part-time _____ percent. (Note what % is part-time)

Community Wildfire Hazard Rating:

What is the adjective risk rating? _____ Date of Assessment? _____

Attach Community Assessment Form.

Community Assessment Highlights (roads, water sources, fuel types, utilities, topography, house characteristics, etc.) **Community Wildfire History:** (include surrounding areas) Relative Frequency:

Common Causes:

Areas of Future Concern:

Additional Comments:

2) COMMUNITY BASE MAP AND OTHER VISUALS

Attach or insert community base map and other visuals.

3) GOALS / OBJECTIVES

Goals:

Goals are general intentions of what is to be attained. The goals of this plan are to make the residents, homes, and other valuable community infrastructure safer from wildfire.

Objectives:

Objectives are precise actions for accomplishment that are measurable.

1. Establish a prioritized list of actions for the community to work on.
2. Reduce the amount of flammable vegetation around structures and other community infrastructure thereby creating defensible space.
3. Decrease the likelihood that structures can be ignited by embers and other methods of ignition through education and activities undertaken.
4. Continue to promote a community prevention and preparedness education program.

4) PRIORITIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed by the Community Firewise Committee, _____VFD and Tennessee Department of Forestry (TDF) staff. The community-wide assessment information was an important component of establishing these priorities. In addition, important factors identified during multiple meetings also played an important role.

Proposed Community Hazard Reduction Priorities:

List areas and treatments recommended:

Examples: 1) Community Clean-up Day. Cut, prune and mow vegetation in shared community spaces. 2) Create an emergency exit. Build an unimproved road from cul-de-sac on Jasper Lane to Old Road.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Proposed Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities:

Example actions to be taken by homeowners: 1) Clean roof and gutters. 2) Keep leaves, pine needles, and grass from under decks. 3) Install 1/8-inch metal screening on inside of vents.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Proposed Education Initiatives Priorities:

Activities planned and implemented by community, local fire department and Department of Forestry. Examples: 1) Distribute information packets to homeowners. 2) Post Firewise USA information on community's website. 3) Create a neighborhood newsletter.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

5) ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan documents the priorities after the hazard reduction, structural ignitability reduction and educational initiatives categories are integrated. The table below established the community's plan of action.

Priority	Project Description	Recommended Action	Estimated Cost	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Source	Target Start Date	Date Completed
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							

6) WILDFIRE PRE-SUPPRESSION PLAN

A. Wildfire Protection Responsibility

Structural:

Wildland:

B. Incident Command Post Location

C. Incident Staging Area Location

D. Medical Unit Location

E. Alarm Response

First Alarm:

Travel Distance:

Response Time:

Second Alarm:

Travel Distance:

Response Time:

F. Air Support

Fixed Wing:

Name/type:

Travel Distance:

Response Time:

Helicopter:

Name/type:

Travel Distance:

Response Time:

G. Water Availability

Location:

Description:

Location:

Description:

Location:

Description:

H. Communications (Attach Communications Plan, if available)

Dispatch/Fire Departments

Name:

Phone Number:

Radio Frequencies:

Local Tennessee Division of Forestry Office

Name:

Phone Number:

Radio Frequencies:

Other entities, if applicable

Phone Number:

Radio Frequencies:

I. Evacuation (Attach Evacuation Plan, if applicable)

J. Resource List

Put down name, contact and payment information for all contractors, agencies, equipment, crews, utilities, fuel, food, supplies, and lodging, if applicable.

7) ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

8) ATTACHMENTS (List here in order of attachments)

Additional Resources for CWPP Development:

“Creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan” , U.S. Fire Administration, May 2020.
https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/creating_a_cwpp.pdf

“Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan”
[04-CPPWbrochure4c-07 \(forestsandrangelands.gov\)](https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/04-CPPWbrochure4c-07)

Community Wildfire Defense Grants

The Community Wildfire Defense Program, or CWDG, is intended to help at-risk local communities and Tribes; plan for and reduce the risk of wildfire. This program, which was authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, prioritizes at-risk communities in an area identified as having high or very high wildfire hazard potential, are low-income, or have been impacted by a severe disaster that affects the risk of wildfire. More details on these three priorities can be found in the Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) provided with the grant guidance. The program provides funding to communities for two primary purposes:

- Develop and revise Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP).
- Implement projects described in a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that is less than ten years old.

The Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program also helps communities in the wildland urban interface (WUI) implement the three goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

- **Restore and Maintain Landscapes:** Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances, in accordance with management objectives.
- **Create Fire Adapted Communities:** Human populations and infrastructure can better withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property.
- **Improve Wildfire Response:** All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

For more information on the CWDG Program, go to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/grants>.

FEMA Community Grants

FEMA administers a **Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)** grant program. This program makes grants for defensible space, structural protection through the application of ignition-resistant construction and limited hazardous fuels reduction to protect life and property. Maximum grant amounts vary from fiscal year to fiscal year. In addition, generally these funds may be used to pay up to 75 % of the eligible activity costs; the remaining 25 % must come from non-Federal sources.

For more general information on the PDM grant program, go to [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#). For detailed information about the program, go to Part B. Wildfire Mitigation of the Addendum to the Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (July 12, 2013).

Fire Department Grants through Ready, Set, Go!

Departments can join this International Association of Fire Chief's program at no cost. The program supplies templates to make local publications and can award community education grants when funding is available. In addition, participating departments will be eligible for "education extra credit points" which can be applied to its ISO rating. You can find the Ready, Set, Go! site at: www.wildlandfireRSG.org

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

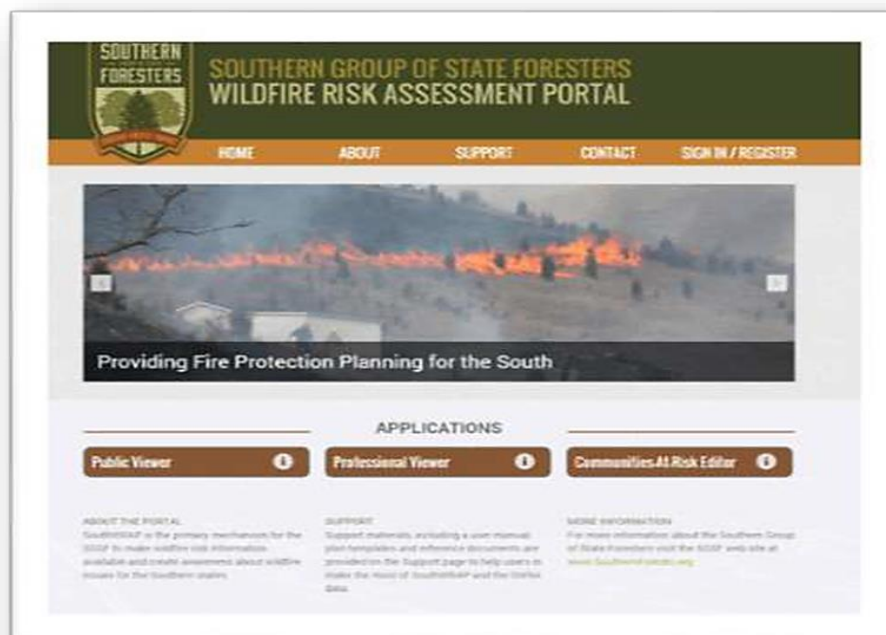
Wildfire Community Preparedness Day is a national campaign that encourages people and organizations every to come together on a single day to take action to raise awareness and reduce wildfire risks. It is held in the United States and Canada on the first Saturday in May.

More information on the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day can be found at <https://www.nfpa.org/Events/Events/National-Wildfire-Community-Preparedness-Day#:~:text=It%20is%20held%20in%20the,the%20first%20Saturday%20in%20May>. There is a downloadable "Prep Day Toolkit that provides a list of project ideas, safety tips, and more to help guide you towards event day.

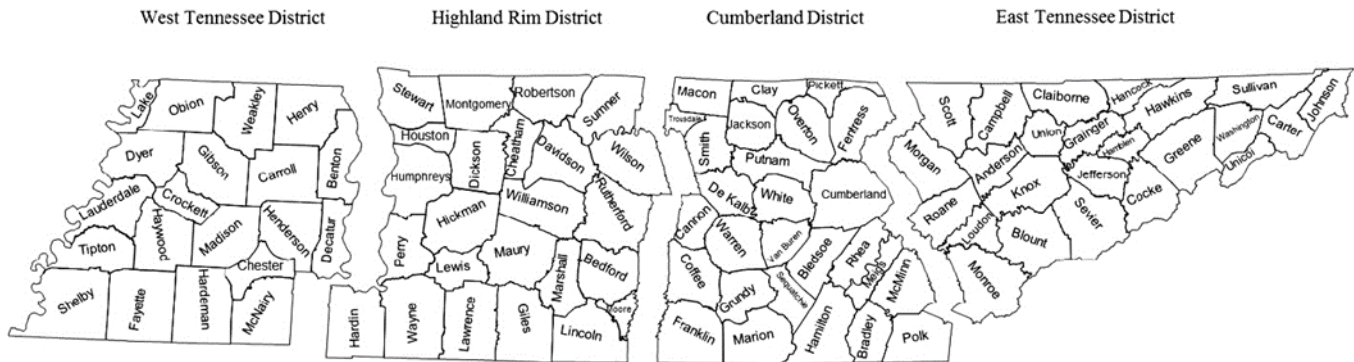
SouthWRAP

In response to the increasing demand for more accurate and up-to date wildfire risk information across the South, the Southern Group of State Foresters embarked on a wildfire risk assessment for the entire South, completing the project in 2005. The goal of the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment (SWRA) project was to provide a consistent, comparable set of scientific results to be used as a foundation for Wildfire mitigation and prevention planning in the Southern states. The Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (SouthWRAP) is available at <https://www.southernwildfirerisk.com> and then clicking on public viewer. Point data includes a relative hazard risk rating, fire ignition and spread information and other useful items which can be used in developing community hazard mitigation strategies.

In 2019, the SouthWRAP program was upgraded and now has available the “Community Assessor for the South” program which can be used by authorized individuals to perform wildland fire hazard assessments for communities. This application supports field assessments using iOS and Android mobile applications. Tools include community maps and hazard risk assessments for use in CWPP’s and the Firewise USA® recognition program. The hazard risk assessments analyze suppression challenges, the local environment, and the structures within the community. It is available for use by Forestry Staff, Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Specialists, and local fire departments. Permission for access can be requested on the portal website.



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Publications and Web Links

1. The TDF www.BurnSafeTN.org: Prevention and Hazard Risk Reduction website
2. The National Firewise USA Tm website: www.firewise.org
3. Fire Adapted Learning Network: <https://fireadaptednetwork.org>-The **Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network** works with communities across the nation to create a more wildfire-resilient future.
4. *Ready Set, Go!* – www.wildlandfirersg.org/ for fire departments to help increase dialogue with community members they serve.
5. *Fire Adapted Communities brings cohesion to the different wildfire hazard mitigation programs*: www.fireadapted.org/
6. *TN Fire Adapted Communities Guide*: an excellent comprehensive wildland fire safety guide for the TN homeowner.
7. *TDF Home Assessment Form*: a form to assess your home.
8. *Is Your Home Firewise?* (a TDF brochure)
9. *Is Your Home Firewise?* (Tenn. Firewise Communities DVD) Hosted by Bill Landry, Host/Narrator, *The Heartland Series*
10. *Hazard Brush Removal Guidelines*- a TDF hazard mitigation publication
11. *How To Help Your Home Survive A Forest Fire* (a TDF brochure)
12. Firewise Communities/USA: Becoming a Firewise Community- DVD YouTube link: https://youtu.be/a1sL_vTgrgM
13. *Your Home Can Survive A Wildfire!* 13:40 min. DVD, Firewise Communities/USA YouTube link: https://youtu.be/vL_syp1ZScM
14. *Making Your Home Firewise*- 22 min. DVD, NFPA/Firewise Communities USA YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/t6jV-gM9EwQ>
15. *Wildfire! Preventing Home Ignitions*- 19 min. DVD- excellent orientation for everyone! YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/p0iR8o54hDU>
16. *Safe Debris Burning*- excellent TDF brochure and checklist on how to safely burn debris.
17. *Landscaping/Construction Checklist*- a TDF hazard mitigation publication
18. *The Southern Center for Wildland-Urban Interface Research and Information*: <http://www.interfacesouth.org>
19. *Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety*: conducts research and promotes effective ways to strengthen homes, businesses and communities against natural disasters: <https://disastersafety.org/wildfire/>