



PRESS RELEASE Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

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For Immediate Release

Prepare for Wildfire Season by Creating Defensible Space

Contact:

Tom Lotshaw, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (775) 589-5278

South Lake Tahoe, Calif. – With summer here and wildfires burning in the Sierra Nevada, people at Lake Tahoe must ensure they are prepared for wildfire by clearing hazardous fuels from their properties and creating defensible space.

“The snow we received this winter has been great, but with elevated levels of tree mortality and entering our fifth year of drought, our fire conditions still remain elevated,” said Chris Anthony, division chief at CAL FIRE. “While our local, state, and federal firefighters are preparing for what is already proving to be a busy fire season, residents and visitors to the Tahoe Basin must also do their part and be ready.”

Be prepared this year:

1. Contact your local fire protection agency for a defensible space consultation so you can prepare your home for fire.
2. Know your evacuation routes—do you have two ways out?
3. Prepare your most precious items, pictures, and heirlooms to be packed in short notice.
4. Sign up for emergency alerts and know where to obtain accurate, up-to-date emergency information.
5. Talk to your neighbors so they also prepare.

Local fire protection districts and fire departments around the Lake Tahoe Region offer defensible space inspections, curbside chipping, and tree removal permits. They are ready to help people reduce wildfire risk and prepare for wildfire.

The U.S. Forest Service also offers defensible space programs for homes and private property adjacent to National Forest System lands. The Homeowner and Defensible Space and Fuels Reduction Stewardship Programs allow homeowners to work with the Forest Service to extend defensible space onto federal land in order to meet recommended clearance standards. For more information on either program, contact the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Hazardous Fuels Program at (530) 543-2759.

When a wildfire ignites, vegetation around homes and buildings can help feed the fire. Appropriately managing that vegetation and creating defensible space increases the chance a home or building will survive the wildfire. Properly managed vegetation also makes it much safer for firefighters to respond to extinguish structure fires.

Lake Tahoe residents are encouraged to work together and with their local fire protection agency to create defensible space throughout entire neighborhoods.

“Fire insurance is becoming increasingly more expensive and difficult to obtain in Lake Tahoe Basin communities,” said Michael Schwartz, fire chief at North Tahoe Fire Protection District. “I urge residents to not only complete their defensible space work, but to encourage their neighbors, HOAs, and communities to engage with their fire agencies and the Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities. Only through making our communities fire adapted can we reduce our risk of catastrophic wildfire and keep our homes insurable.”

The Tahoe Resource Conservation District partners with residents and fire districts of the Lake Tahoe Basin through the Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities. Community volunteers and leaders are needed and should contact Marybeth Donahoe at (530) 543-1501 ext. 114 to learn more.

Remember to Think First to Keep Tahoe Fire Safe this summer. Visit www.ThinkFirstTahoe.org to learn more about wildfire prevention and preparedness and sign a pledge to show you are taking the wildfire threat at Tahoe seriously and working to reduce wildfire risk in our communities.

| Fire Dept./District | Defensible Space Inspections Request online at tahoe.livingwithfire.info | Curbside Chipping Program | Tree Removal Permit* |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Fallen Leaf Lake Fire Department | No | Free, provided by Lake Valley FPD. Call 530-577-CHIP (2447) | Contact TRPA. \$53 fee |
| Lake Valley Fire Protection District | Free | Free. Call 530-577-CHIP (2447). | \$75 fee |
| Meeks Bay Fire Protection District | Free | Free. Use online form to request at www.meeksbayfire.com | \$80 fee |
| North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District | Free | Free. Use online form to request at www.nltfpd.net | Free |
| North Tahoe Fire Protection District | Free | Free. Use online form to request at www.ntfire.net | \$80 fee waived for 2016 |
| South Lake Tahoe Fire Rescue | Free | No | Contact TRPA. \$53 fee |
| Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District | Free | Free. Use online form to request at www.tahoefire.org | Free |

*A permit is needed to remove living trees greater than 14 inches diameter at breast height. Additional restrictions apply in stream environment zones and on lakefront properties.

Sign up to receive emergency notifications now before a local emergency such as a wildfire occurs.

City of South Lake Tahoe: www.cityofslt.us/signup

El Dorado County: <http://ready.edso.org/>

Placer County: www.placer-alert.org

Douglas County: <https://douglascounty.onthealert.com/>

Washoe County: <https://www.washoecounty.us/em/RegionalAlerts.php>

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About the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT) consists of representatives of Tahoe Basin fire agencies, CAL FIRE, Nevada Division of Forestry and related state agencies, University of California and Nevada Cooperative Extensions, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the U.S. Forest Service, conservation districts from both states, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Our Mission is to protect lives, property and the environment within the Lake Tahoe Basin from wildfire by implementing prioritized fuels reduction projects and engaging the public in becoming a Fire Adapted Community.

For more information, visit www.tahoefft.org.