



PRESS RELEASE

Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

For Immediate Release

June 3, 2016

Think First—Keep Tahoe Fire Safe! June is Lake Tahoe Wildfire Awareness Month

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Lake Tahoe, CA/NV – The hot, dry days of summer will soon be upon us. Preparing your home for wildfire is more important than ever. And now is a good time to get started. June is “Wildfire Awareness Month” in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and members of the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team are asking all Tahoe residents and visitors to “Think First to Keep Tahoe Fire Safe”

Funded primarily by a grant from Cal Fire, this year’s “Think First” outreach campaign was created by the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team and the Abbi Agency of Reno. It launched on June 3rd as part of Lake Tahoe Wildfire Awareness Month. During June and continuing throughout the summer and fall, residents and visitors will receive clear, encouraging messages on how to “Think First” to prevent starting a wildfire and to prepare their homes and businesses for when a natural wildfire does occur.

“We have made significant progress working with our cooperating agency partners on reducing the wildfire threat in the Lake Tahoe Basin with more than 50,000 of the 117,000 wildland urban interface (WUI) acres being treated; however it is an ongoing effort that has no end date and no limitation as to participating partners. Cooperating agencies have targeted the remaining 67,000 WUI acres to be treated within the next 5 to 10 years and when that work is done, we begin again with re-entry treatments. We need everyone’s help from fire districts, land owners, business owners and home owners to THINK FIRST and do their part in working towards becoming a fire adapted community” said Fire Chief Ryan Sommers with the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District.

The Lake Tahoe Basin Regional Fire Chiefs are encouraging residents to THINK FIRST and:

- Create defensible space by removing dead vegetation, leaves and pine needles that are located next to their home, on the roof or in rain gutters.
- Trim low tree branches to a height of at least 10 feet.
- Move firewood stacks to a location at least 30 feet from the home.
- Develop a personal and family evacuation plan.

Visitors to the area are also being asked to THINK FIRST to prevent starting a wildfire while recreating in the Lake Tahoe Basin's extensive public lands and national forests. In the basin, more than 90 percent of wildland fires are human-caused and easily preventable. These include tips to:

- Put out campfires before leaving the campsite, and only have campfires in designated fire rings where they are allowed.
- Avoid the use of charcoal when barbequing.
- Use an approved spark arrestor when off-roading.
- Enjoy professional fireworks shows.

Two events are happening on June 11 as part of the Think First campaign launch and Wildfire Awareness Month. Representatives from the Tahoe Fire Fuels Team will be on hand at each of the events, and at other events throughout the summer, to visit with people one-on-one and discuss wildfire prevention and preparedness questions.

- The North Tahoe and Meeks Bay Fire Districts are holding a Fire Safe Bar-B-Que from noon to 3 p.m. at 222 Fairway Drive in Tahoe City.
- The South Lake Tahoe Fire Rescue will hold their third annual Wildfire Safety Expo from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the TJ Maxx parking lot located at 2015 Lake Tahoe Blvd., also known as the "Y".

For more information on how to prepare for wildfire or to locate your local fire district, visit tahoe.livingwithfire.info.

Take the pledge to Think First to help prevent wildfires and help prepare our communities and learn more at ThinkFirstTahoe.org.

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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.tahoafft.org [tahoafft.org].