

2016 Firewise Renewal Document

November 11, 2016

Prepared by

Sun City Texas Firewise Group



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Recognition Program

Online courses and education

Wildfire Preparedness

Blog

Order materials

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[Recognition Program](#) > [My Firewise Community](#)

Sun City Texas Community Association

Georgetown, TX Williamson County County

Community information

Main Contact: Jim Romine *Email [n/a](#) to inform them of a change*

Forestry Contact: Kari Hines, TFS

Community Fire Chief:

2016 Resident Count: 13631

2016 Investment: \$5,565,968.00

[Edit](#)

MY FIREWISE COMMUNITY

PROGRAM CRITERIA

PROGRAM BENEFITS

FIREWISE COMMUNITIES MAP

FIREWISE COMMUNITIES LIST

TALKING TO YOUR NEIGHBORS ABOUT FIREWISE

FOR ACTIVE FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

STATE LIAISON LIST

GRANTS AND FUNDING

USAA PROVIDES POLICYHOLDER DISCOUNTS IN FIVE STATES

Events

Date	Attendee Count	Name	Location	Files	
8/13/2009	75	Firewise Day	Georgetown, TX	Files	Edit Delete
6/9/2010	100	Firewise Day	Social Center Ballroom, Sun City Texas	Files	Edit Delete
10/20/2011	427	Firewise Day	Sun City Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
10/20/2011	427	Firewise Day	Sun City Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
10/9/2012	95	Firewise Day	Sun City Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
10/9/2013	80	Firewise Town Hall	Sun City Texas Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
5/3/2014	72	Wildfire Preparedness Day	Sun City Texas Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
5/2/2015	51	Wildfire Preparedness Day	Cowan Creek Amenity Center	Files	Edit Delete
10/6/2015	60	Town Hall	Sun City Texas Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
10/4/2016	80	Annual Firewise Town Hall	Sun City Texas Ballroom	Files	Edit Delete
5/6/2016	48	Wildfire Preparedness Day	Legacy Hills Pavilion	Files	Edit Delete
11/11/2016	100	Publications	Sun City Texas	Files	Edit Delete
11/11/2016	41	Home Ignition Zone Evaluation	Sun City Texas	Files	Edit Delete

Date of Event:

Name of Event:

Location of Event:

Description of the Community's 2016 Mitigation Activities and Annual Firewise Day/Event:

Each year a designated Firewise Day/Event is a component of the required renewal criteria needed to continue your active community designation. In addition, mitigation activities developed using the community's action plan must also be done to achieve the annual per capita investment requirement. Activities and risk reduction actions should be promoted to all residents and their involvement/participation is strongly encouraged. Potential types of activities include: neighborhood chipping projects, a community clean-up day, fuel reduction in a commonly-owned area, residents helping a senior or disabled resident reduce their risk, a community wildfire education workshop, etc.

Share details about both your Firewise Day/Event and the mitigation activities that your community

completed to meet the per capita investment requirement:

Number of Attendees:

Your event has been created successfully.

Annual Renewal

Your community has been renewed for 2016.

More Firewise around the Web: [facebook](#)



Description of Sun City Texas

Sun City Texas Community Association is located within the city of Georgetown, Texas, 5.5 miles from Interstate 35 on Williams Drive. Sun City Texas is an urban community with wildland vegetation (a hardwood, juniper, and native grass type) in the open spaces and adjacent properties. Sun City will have approximately 10,000 houses on about 5,200 acres at build out.

As of November 1, 2016, there are 7,386 homes with a population of 13,631 residents. Sun City Texas is presently the largest Home Owners Association recognized as a Firewise Community in Texas. The community is divided into 68 Neighborhoods each with their own local organization.

The Sun City Texas Community Association (CA) is responsible for the management of all non-residential property. CA documents define a set of four maintenance levels for management. Included in these levels are federally defined protection areas for karst formations (including underground caves) for endangered species. The CA also owns and maintains three golf courses.

Berry Creek and its tributaries, Cowan and Rocky Hollow, originally had hardwood trees with an Ashe juniper (cedar) tree understory in the flood plain. The presence of Ashe juniper (cedar) trees, an invasive native, posed a fire hazard as a ladder fuel and acted as debris accumulation points during periods of creek floods. Additionally, Ashe juniper along with other invasive species create a fire hazard in many of the common areas. Shaded fuel breaks have been established in two heavy concentrations that posed a significant wildfire threat. Since the 2010 flooding event approximately 8.5 miles of flood plain have been cleared of Ashe juniper. An additional 400 acres of common area have been cleared for wildfire concerns.

Sun City Texas has 724 Landscaped Maintained Homes (LMH) managed by the CA. The lawns, beds, and trees are maintained under a vendor contract with the CA. The CA Staff and the Landscaped Maintained Homes Committee apply the Firewise Home Ignition Zone principles to LMH properties.

All other residential properties are the responsibility of the individual property owners for the implementation of the Home Ignition Zone principles. Homeowner education is the key to providing information to community residents concerning the dangers from wildfires and to encourage the management of the space around their residence.

The Sun City Texas Firewise Group is a subcommittee of the Sun City Texas Emergency Management Committee.

The Firewise Group assigns specific tasks to the following program groups:

Education Work Group

Community Wildfire Protection and Renewal Process Program Work Group

Firewise Clearing Crew

The Firewise Group hosts an annual community-wide Firewise Town Hall and an informational display is used at the quarterly New Residents Orientation Town Hall. Presentations are also made at community events such as special town halls, Neighborhood events, and club meetings. Since Sun City Texas is divided into Neighborhoods, participation in Neighborhood meetings provides the Firewise Group with opportunities for face-to-face contact with the residents. The monthly CA magazine

Sun Rays, the weekly CA Communicator e-mails, and special e-mails are used to communicate additional information about Firewise and about high fire danger situations when they occur.

The Firewise Group maintains a trained core team of about 35 volunteer Home Ignition Zone Evaluators to conduct Home Ignition Zone evaluations as requested by residents. They also are Neighborhood sources for Firewise information.

The Firewise Group works with the CA Staff, the Property and Grounds Committee, the Wildlife Management Committee, the Modifications Committee, and the Golf Committee to reduce the potential for wildfires in the CA-owned common areas. The volunteer Firewise Clearing Crew meets weekly (weather and Staff availability permitting). Working with the CA Landscaping staff, the Firewise Clearing Crew removes small Ashe junipers and vines in common areas that could become ladder fuels in a wildfire.

Partner Groups

Firewise Communities/USA

Cathy Prudhomme, National Program Manager, presented an update on the national program at the Town Hall. This is the first time Firewise Communities/USA has participated in our program.

USAA Insurance

Rob Galbraith, Director of Property Underwriting, presented 'Why USAA Believes You Should Be Firewise' explaining why USAA provides a discount to their policy holders.

Texas A&M Forest Service

This has been an excellent year working with the Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS). Nick Harrison, Firewise Coordinator, provided an update at the Firewise Town Hall.

Georgetown Fire Department

The Firewise Group partnered with the Georgetown Fire Department (GFD) in the Wildfire Preparedness Day in May and the annual Firewise Community Town Hall in October.

Sun City Texas Community Association Advisory Committees

Property and Grounds Committee (P&G) The Firewise Group continues to work with P&G. The Firewise Group provides an annual review of progress and proposed clearing activities and provide advice on the management of common areas. P&G provides a liaison to the Firewise Group.

Wildlife Management Committee (WMC) The Firewise Group continues to work with WMC to improve wildlife habitat while meeting the goal of reducing the wildfire potential. Removing the Ashe juniper has changed the habits of the deer and turkey populations. WMC provides a liaison to the Firewise Group.

Sun City Texas Staff

The Firewise Group also works with the CA Common Area Staff by advising on the clearing and maintenance of all native common areas. Meetings with interested residents, staff, and Firewise may be held in a work area to provide the rationale for the work.

2016 Accomplishments

Table 1 contains the volunteer time and Community Association contributions for the calendar year.

Projects were identified by Firewise leaders who have many years of experience in land management and the fire service. During the first half of the year, the Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew, supported by the CA staff, assembled weekly weather permitting to remove small Ashe junipers and ladder fuel in the common areas. To date, the Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew and CA Staff and equipment have reduced the fire threat on approximately 240 acres.

Sun City Texas Firewise, Texas A&M Forest Service, and Firewise Communities/USA publications continue to be distributed in the Welcome Packets given to each new resident. The publications are also available at all Firewise presentations and events. Firewise information is also presented in the Sun City Texas Resource Guide (directory) which is distributed to all residents.

Fourteen groups, staff, or notices mentioned Firewise in articles published in the monthly *Sun Rays* resident magazine. Additional information items about Firewise and fire dangers were produced for the weekly CA Communicator e-mails.

Wildfire Preparedness Day

Wildfire Preparedness Day was held on May 2 with 36 volunteers, 8 Staff members and 4 members of the GFD Wildland Crew. A 5 acre common area that had Ashe juniper removed 3 years earlier was targeted. The volunteers, using hand tools only, cleared the area. The CA Staff prepared brats and hot dogs, chips, and drinks for lunch. Additional funding was received from Bartlett Tree Experts, TCB Landscaping, and Valley Crest Landscaping. Bartlett Tree Experts also provided 100 tree seedlings for residents as part of their nation-wide program. The support of the vendors is greatly appreciated.

Publications

Two new publications were developed. *Being Firewise Around Your Home* and *What is Firewise?* For use with residents.

The Firewise Trumpet newsletter is published monthly. It is distributed to community leaders, Firewise volunteers, Neighborhoods, and others.

Firewise Town Hall

The Annual Firewise Town Hall was held October 4 with Firewise Communities/USA, USAA Insurance, Texas A&M Forest Service, Georgetown Fire Department and Sun City Texas Firewise Group participating. Attendance was about 80 people plus the TV live audience over local Channel 18 in Sun City Texas. Residents can view the video of the Town Hall on the Sun City Firewise web site.

Table 1. The 2016 hours and costs contributed by volunteers, homeowners, and CA.

Sun City Texas Data

Rooftops	7,386	rooftops		
Residents	13,631	residents		

<u>item</u>	<u>number</u>	<u>units</u>	<u>value</u>	<u>total</u>
Volunteers				
Firewise volunteers	1,585	hours	37,343	
Home Ignition Zone Evaluations	63	hours	1,484	
Volunteer Clearing Crew	40	hours	942	
Subtotal-Volunteer Contribution	1,688	hours		\$39,769
Landscape Maintained Homes (726 houses) ¹				\$241,842
Creek Clearing Crew ¹			197,200	
Subtotal-Community Association Contribution				\$197,200
Resident Contribution (prorated) for House and Yard Maintenance				
Paid to vendor			1,622,458	
Own care			3,464,699	
Subtotal-Resident Contribution				\$5,087,157
Total contribution				\$5,565,968

¹ Values represent amount spent for Firewise remediation only.

Media Coverage

- The City Insider, included an article entitled “Wildfire Safety A Priority in Sun City” in January.
- NFPA Blog – Sun City Firewise Big in Texas, January 19, 2016
- An article in Firewise Blog entitled “Sun City Firewise Big in Texas” January 19.

- City Week, a part of the Williamson County Sun weekly newspaper, published an article entitled “Prepare for Wildfires by Clearing Brush” May 4, 2016
- Common Ground, the publication of the Community Association Institute, entitled “In the Line of Fire” in the July-August issue.

The CA Communications Department publishes a monthly magazine *Sun Rays* distributed to all residents. Information about the Sun City Texas Firewise program was included in 6 of the 10 editions this year.

The Communications Department also updated a 4x6 inch information card given to residents to encourage participation in the Home Ignition Zone Evaluation program.

New Residents Orientation Town Hall

The Sun City Texas Community Association conducts a quarterly New Residents Orientation to acquaint the newcomers to the many activities offered in Sun City Texas. The Firewise Group participates in activities providing information about Firewise and how a resident can reduce the potential for their home. Residents are given information about using appropriate landscape plants and landscape maintenance to reduce the hazards. They are also given the opportunity to request a free Home Ignition Zone Evaluation on their home and consider volunteering for Firewise Group functions.

Training Program

Home Ignition Zone Evaluation

The Firewise Group held two training sessions. The April 15 session included 6 evaluators for continuing education. The October 27 session included 3 new evaluators and 9 evaluators for continuing education. These sessions are available to outside groups and agencies.

Landscape Companies Training

The Firewise Group held the annual landscape training session on January 29. The session included 8 companies with 14 individuals. Companies are required to have continuing education every three years. Currently there are 21 companies who have met the requirements and are listed in the Vendor Notebooks for residents and on the Firewise web site.

2017 Plans

- Conduct a landscape company training event on January 27.
- Distribute Firewise information to residents at New Residents Orientation.
- Hold a Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, May 5.
- Conduct the Firewise Town Hall on October 3.
- Continue training for the Home Ignition Zone Evaluation Program with sessions

on May 18 and October 19.

- Provide Firewise information at Neighborhood, club, and community-wide gatherings as requested.
- Continue working with the CA Property and Grounds, Wildlife Management, Golf, and Modifications Committees integrating Firewise practices into the community.
- Work to promote National Fire Prevention Week with Georgetown Fire Department.
- Develop renewal materials for 2017.