

2022 Firewise Renewal Narrative

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Prepared by

Sun City Texas Firewise Group



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Sun City Texas Community Association

Community Description

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 adjoining properties. Sun City will have approximately 10,000 houses on about 5,200 acres at build out.

As of October 31, 2022, there are 8,784 homes with an estimated population of 16,520 residents. Sun City Texas is presently one of the largest Firewise Community Home Owners Association in Texas. Sun City Texas currently has 76 of 90 planned neighborhoods each with their own organization.

Sun City has been divided into five communities to meet the current Firewise USA requirements. The Areas are named Sun City Texas CA 1, Sun City Texas CA 2, Sun City Texas CA 3, Sun City Texas CA 4, and Sun City Texas CA 5. The planned and active neighborhoods and current population are in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the boundaries of the five communities.

Table 1. Planned and active neighborhoods and current population.

	<u>Area 1</u>	<u>Area 2</u>	<u>Area 3</u>	<u>Area 4</u>	<u>Area 5</u>	<u>total</u>
planned	17	16	21	15	21	90
active	17	16	20	15	8	76
residents	4,064	4,148	3,373	3,302	1,363	16,250

All residential properties are the responsibility of the individual property owners for the implementation of the Home Ignition Zone principles. Homeowner education, provided by the Firewise Group, is the key for residents having information concerning the dangers from wildfires and to encourage the management of the space around their residence.

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 protected areas for karst formations (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. Shaded fuel breaks have been established in three heavy concentrations that posed a significant wildfire threat. Since a major flooding event that occurred in 2010, the miles of flood plains have been cleared of Ashe juniper and willow baccharis. An additional 500 acres of common area have been remediated for wildfire concerns.

Firewise Areas



Figure 1. The boundaries of the five Firewise areas.

Sun City Texas Community Association Risk Assessment

Texas A&M Forest Service conducted the risk assessment on September 14, 2022. We anticipate the results later this year.

The Sun City Texas Firewise Group

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

The Sun City Texas Firewise Group was started on January 29, 2009 during a meeting with Jan Fulkerson, Texas Forest Service and Sun City residents, Staff, and Georgetown Fire Department.

Organization

The Firewise Group has evolved over the years. Within Sun City, the Firewise Group works with the CA Staff, the Property and Grounds Committee, and the Wildlife Management Committee to reduce the potential for wildfires, flooding, and improve habitat diversity in the CA-owned common areas.

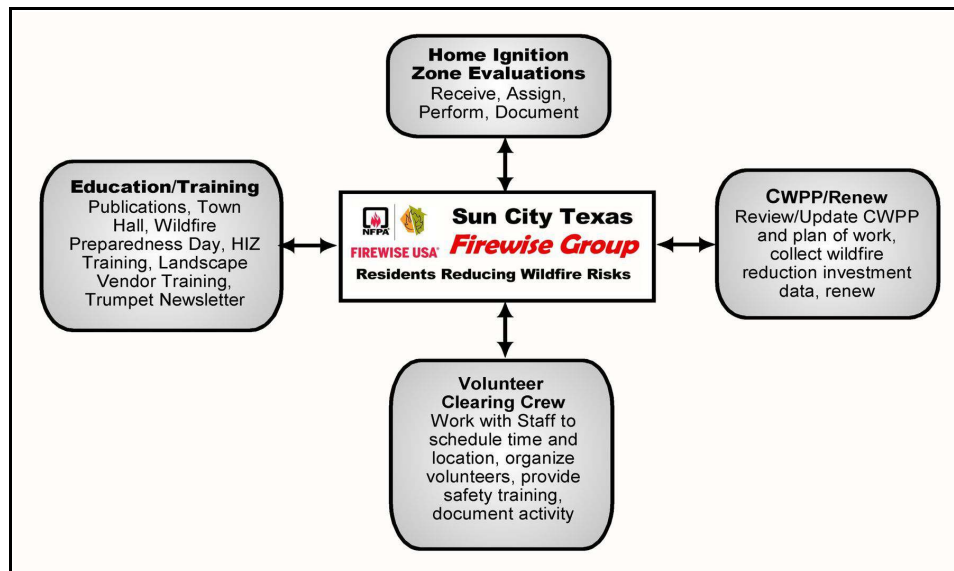


Figure 2. The organization chart for the Sun City Texas Firewise Group.

An organizational structure has continued to evolve as four Work Groups (Figure 2). Each group has specific tasks as follows:

Education and Training Work Group

Education

- * Education organizes and hosts 2 events each year. The events are a Wildfire Preparedness Day on the first Friday of May and a community-wide Firewise Town Hall in October on Fire Prevention Day.
- * The group prepares and distributes publications to the residents.
- * A monthly newsletter, Firewise Trumpet, is produced and distributed to a mailing list within and outside Sun City. It is available on the Firewise Group website.
- * An informational display is used at the Town Hall, quarterly New Residents Orientation and other events. Participation in Neighborhood meetings provides

the Firewise Group opportunities for face-to-face contact with the residents. The monthly CA magazine Sun Rays, weekly CA Communicator e-mails, NRO Bulletin, and special e-mails are used to communicate additional information about Firewise and about high fire danger situations when they occur.

Training

* Firewise Landscape Vendor Training is provided in January for landscape service providers who are interested in providing the services to meet Sun City Firewise guidelines.

* Home Ignition Zone Evaluator Training is conducted in October for new volunteers and as continuing education for current Evaluators.

Home Ignition Zone Evaluator Work Group

The Firewise Group maintains a trained core of 15 volunteer Home Ignition Zone Evaluators to conduct Home Ignition Zone Evaluations as requested by residents. They also are Neighborhood sources for Firewise information.

Community Wildfire Protection and Renewal Work Group

The Community Wildfire Protection and Renewal Work Group is responsible for the development and submission of the annual renewal material to maintain its 'In Good Standing' status. The Work Group uses a November 1 to October 31 calendar for data and information collection.

Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew

The Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew works with the CA Landscaping staff to remove small Ashe junipers, vines, and other materials in mowed fuel breaks between the common areas and resident's property that could become ladder fuels in a wildfire. The Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew works weekly (weather and staff availability permitting). The Work Group notifies neighborhoods when working near them to promote resident participation.

Sun City Texas Community Association

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, requested by the staff, with interested residents and Firewise may be held in a work area to provide the rationale for the work. The CA provides a liaison to the Firewise Group.

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. Firewise provides a liaison to the WMC.

Partner Groups

Texas A&M Forest Service - This has been an excellent year working with the Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) Walter Flopcke, Wildland-Urban Interface Coordinator.

Firewise USA - We regularly share information about how we apply Firewise concepts in our urban/suburban area.

USAA Insurance - We maintain communications with USAA Insurance to understand their fire insurance premium reduction.

Georgetown Fire Department - The Firewise Group maintains a working relationship with GFD to promote the development of Firewise Communities within Georgetown.

Georgetown Emergency Management Coordinator - The Firewise Group continues to work with the Georgetown Emergency Management Coordinator.

Williamson County Office of Emergency Management (WilCo OEM) - The Firewise Group maintains a relationship with WilCo OEM.

2022 Accomplishments

Wildfire Risk Reduction Investment

Table 1 contains the wildfire risk reduction investment items contributed for the year. The investment is the value of the volunteer hours and direct costs supporting the Firewise effort.

Firewise Group

The Firewise Group met 11 times. Over the year the Group contributed equivalent of over 80 weeks maintaining the operational requirements of the group.

Home Ignition Zone Evaluation Work Group

The Home Ignition Zone Evaluation Zone Work Group was able to conduct evaluations. HIZ contributed the equivalent of over 4 weeks of work.

Community Wildfire Preparedness Day

Community Wildfire Preparedness Day was held May 6, 2022. The attendance, including residents and staff, was 51 people. A fuel break protecting a neighborhood was cleared of small Ashe juniper. Plans are to hold a Community Wildfire Preparedness Day 2023.

Table 1. 2022 Wildfire Risk Reduction Investment (as of October 31, 2022)

item	units	Sun City Totals		Area 1		Area 2		Area 3		Area 4		Area 5	
		number	value	number	value	number	value	number	value	number	value	hours	value
Volunteers													
Firewise volunteers	hours	940	26,819	245	6,995	251	7,165	194	5,524	154	4,392	96	2,743
Administrative	hours	470	13,414	119	3,398	119	3,409	97	2,772	95	2,714	39	1,121
Events													
Preparedness Day	hours	131	3,739	7	200	36	1,027	20	571	52	1,484	16	457
Town Hall	hours	311	8,872	31	892	96	2,732	76	2,175	76	2,175	31	898
Home Ignition Zone Evaluations	hours	128	3,653	4	457	16	1,827	32	3,653	48	5,480	28	3,196
Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew	hours	371	10,588	132	3,767	120	3,425	12	342	48	1,370	59	1,684
Subtotal-Volunteer input		2,351	67,085	538	15,709	638	19,585	431	15,037	473	17,615	270	10,099
Community Association													
Staff Clearing Crew	dollars		240,600		60,177		61,410		49,933		48,892		20,187
Resident contribution (prorated)													
Paid to vendor	paid	1,464	1,929,552	366	482,608	374	492,493	304	400,452	298	392,105	123	161,894
Own care	hours	1,464	5,087,022	366	1,264,498	374	1,301,062	304	1,057,911	298	1,035,859	123	427,691
Subtotal-Resident Contribution			7,016,574		1,747,106		1,793,555		1,458,364		1,427,964		589,585
Total Contribution			7,324,259		1,822,992		1,874,550		1,523,334		1,494,472		619,871

Publications

Eleven issues of the Firewise Trumpet newsletter were published. It is distributed to community leaders, Firewise volunteers, Neighborhood Firewise Partners, and others. The Firewise Trumpet is available online.

Sun City Texas Firewise Group, Texas A&M Forest Service, and Firewise USA publications continue to be distributed to residents. The publications are also available at all Firewise presentations and events. One page of Firewise information is presented in the Sun City Texas Resource Guide (directory) which is distributed to all residents.

Current local publications for Sun City are:

- Sun City and Firewise Ignition Zones
- Being Firewise Around Your Home
- Firewise Tree Trimming Guidelines
- Understanding Ashe Juniper (Cedar) in Sun City
- Sun City Texas Firewise Plant List

Two publications were updated.

Firewise Town Hall

The Annual Firewise Town Hall was held October 4 with 125 residents attending. The topic was Embers, Fuel Breaks, Fire Breaks, Houses. Presenters included Texas A&M Forest Service, Georgetown Fire Department, Georgetown Emergency Management and Sun City Firewise Group. Sun City Advisory Committees Emergency Management, Citizens on Patrol (COPs), Property and Grounds and Wildlife Management provided residents with information and answered questions. Plans are to hold a Town Hall in 2023.

New Residents Orientation

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 participated in four Orientations. 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. Plans are to participate in all four orientations in 2023.

Training Program

Landscape Vendor Companies Training

The Firewise Group held the annual landscape training session on January 28. The training included 10 companies with 11 individuals. Companies are required to have continuing education every three years to remain on the list. Currently there are 13 companies who have met the requirements. A list is distributed to residents at events, is in the Vendor Notebooks at the Monitor Desks for residents, and on the Firewise web site. Plans are to hold a Landscape Vendor Companies Training on January 27, 2023.

Home Ignition Zone Evaluator Training

A training sessions was held October 28 with 1 new Evaluator and 11 Evaluators for Continuing Education attending. One Neighborhood Firewise Partner attended. Plans are to hold a Home Ignition Zone Evaluator Training on October 27, 2023.

Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew

The Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew held 29 workdays during the year. Their work was the equivalent to just over 14 weeks. They received approval of special working conditions approved by the CA BOD. Rain, CA staff availability and weather conditions cancelled some workdays. The Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew also assisted the CA Landscape Crew in removing down limbs and debris after the severe winter storms earlier this year, thus reducing fire fuel in our common areas.

Media Coverage

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 and NRO (Neighborhood Representatives Organization) Bulletin e-mails. The NRO Bulletin has a link to the Firewise web page and includes articles when requested.

The following were published about the Sun City Firewise Group:

Sun Rays

Firewise had an article or was mentioned 7 times.

NRO Bulletin

A link to the Home Ignition Zone Evaluation form is included every issue. Firewise had an article or was mentioned 8 times.

Sun City Texas Firewise Group 2023-2025 Plans

2023 Plans

- Distribute Firewise information to residents at the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Firewise Town Hall, quarterly New Residents Orientation and other opportunities including the Firewise web page.
- Provide Firewise information at neighborhood, club, and community-wide gatherings as requested.
- Prepare and distribute timely articles for the Sun Rays, Communicator, and NRO Bulletin.
- Publish and distribute the Firewise Trumpet Newsletter 11 times.

- Education/Training Events
 - " Conduct a Landscape Vendor Training on January 27, 2023.
 - " Hold a Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, May 5, 2023.
 - " Conduct the Firewise Town Hall on October 10, 2023.
 - " Provide training for Home Ignition Zone Evaluators on October 27, 2023.
- Continue the Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew to assist in maintaining the mowed fuel breaks.
- Plan education events for 2024.
- Develop support and training for Firewise Partners on the 5 Firewise Communities within Sun City Texas.
- Outside cooperation and support
 - " Continue cooperating with the Georgetown Fire Department to develop Firewise Communities within and near Georgetown.
 - " Continue cooperating with Texas A&M Forest Service.
 - " Continue contact with USAA Insurance to understand the Firewise discount.
 - " Continue contact with Firewise USA for continued information.

2024 Plans

- Distribute Firewise information to residents at the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Firewise Town Hall, quarterly New Residents Orientation and other opportunities including the Firewise web page.
- Provide Firewise information at neighborhood, club, and community-wide gatherings as requested.
- Prepare and distribute timely articles for the Sun Rays, Communicator, and NRO Bulletin.
- Publish and distribute the Firewise Trumpet Newsletter 11 times.
- Education/Training Events
 - " Conduct a Landscape Vendor Training on January 26, 2024.

- " Hold a Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, May 3, 2024.
- " Conduct the Firewise Town Hall on October 8, 2024.
- " Provide training for Home Ignition Zone Evaluators on October 25, 2024.
- Continue the Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew to assist in maintaining the mowed fuel breaks.
- Plan education events for 2025.
- Maintain support and training for Firewise Partners on the 5 Firewise Communities within Sun City Texas.
- Outside cooperation and support
 - " Continue cooperating with the Georgetown Fire Department to develop Firewise Communities within and near Georgetown.
 - " Continue cooperating with Texas A&M Forest Service.
 - " Continue contact with USAA Insurance to understand the Firewise discount.
 - " Continue contact with Firewise USA for continued information.

2025 Plans

- Distribute Firewise information to residents at the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Firewise Town Hall, quarterly New Residents Orientation and other opportunities including the Firewise web page.
- Provide Firewise information at neighborhood, club, and community-wide gatherings as requested.
- Prepare and distribute timely articles for the Sun Rays, Communicator, and NRO Bulletin.
- Publish and distribute the Firewise Trumpet Newsletter 11 times.
- Education/Training Events
 - " Conduct a Landscape Vendor Training on January 31, 2025.
 - " Hold a Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, May 2, 2025.
 - " Conduct the Firewise Town Hall on October 7, 2025.

- " Provide training for Home Ignition Zone Evaluators on October 31, 2025
- Continue the Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew to assist in maintaining the mowed fuel breaks.
- Plan education events for 2026.
- Maintain support and training for Firewise Partners on the 5 Firewise Communities within Sun City Texas.
- Outside cooperation and support
 - " Continue cooperating with the Georgetown Fire Department to develop Firewise Communities within and near Georgetown.
 - " Continue cooperating with Texas A&M Forest Service.
 - " Continue contact with USAA Insurance to understand the Firewise discount.
 - " Continue contact with Firewise USA for continued information.