

FIREWISE TRUMPET

Volume 10

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Number 6



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Firewise Group Notes

* The June 28 Firewise Group Meeting was changed to a work session with members and liaisons. The following were the topics:

* A presentation on the past, present, and future of the Firewise Group was discussed.

* Training for Neighborhood Firewise Partners was discussed.

* The new display board was reviewed.

* Firewise Clearing Crew report on Page 2.

Meeting Notes for this and previous meetings can be found on the [web site](#).

The next Firewise Group meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2023 at 1 pm in the Mesquite Room in The Oaks.

Sun City Texas Firewise Web Links

[Web Site](#)
[Meeting Notes](#)
[Current Publications](#)
[Annual Renewal Documents](#)
[Town Hall videos](#)
[Landscape Vendor Service Provider list](#)

Firewise Group Leadership

Chair - Dan Dodson
Vice-Chair - Mark Marino
Recorder - Judy Whitmore
Webmaster - Melissa Lane
HIZ Coordinator - Doug Lane
Firewise Clearing Crew Coordinator - Petra Garren
Education Coordinator - Dan Dodson

Our Partners



Click logo for information!

July

July 20, Education/Training Work Group, 1:00 pm; Mesquite Room

July 26, Firewise Group, 1:00 pm, Mesquite Room

August

August 17, New Resident Orientation, 8:30 am, SCB

August 17, Education/Training Work Group, 1:00 pm; Mesquite Room

August 23, Firewise Group, 1:00 pm, Mesquite Room

Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Numbers

The HIZ completion status:

| Month ending | 5/24 | 6/28 |
|--------------|-------|-------|
| Received | 1,095 | 1,095 |
| Completed | 1,094 | 1,094 |
| New requests | 0 | 0 |
| Open | 1 | 0 |

From The Chair

What is the HIZ?

The Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) evaluation is a methodology used to evaluate how a home responds to threats from wildfires (especially embers). It was developed in the late 1990's for the western United States and their specific environment using experiments, models, and post-fire studies.

Over the years the process has been adapted to meet the specific needs of other areas. As we recognize, the environment we see in central Texas and specifically in Sun City differs from that of other areas. However, the overall process is very similar.

The Home Ignition evaluation is divided into 3 distinct zones: (1) Immediate, (2) Intermediate, and (3) Extended.

The first zone (Immediate) begins at the home foundation and extends for 5'. Flammable materials in this area have the greatest potential of involving the structure in fire. As such, this area deserves priority in removing the hazards.

Zone 2 (Intermediate) is defined as 5' to 30' from the structure. This area should have fire breaks such as driveways, sidewalks, paths, and other hard structures. Lawns need to be maintained to a height of no more than 4". Trees need (continued page 2)

From The Chair (continued)

to be spaced such that the crowns are no closer than 10'. Selection of trees and shrubs are such to break up the continuity.

Zone 3 (Extended) begins at 30' and can extend up to 200'. The goal in this area is not to eliminate fires but to interrupt the fire's path and to keep the flames smaller and on the ground.

As we apply these criteria to what we see in central Texas and specifically in Sun City Texas (SCT), we encounter an area for which the resident is responsible (nearest to the home), another that the Community Association (CA) has responsibility (within Sun City Texas), and an area outside either.

The Firewise Group has adapted these definitions to fit what we see here. We have trained evaluators that apply the criteria to specifically to homes that request a HIZ and report the findings to the resident only. Whether or not the resident elects to implement any recommendation is up to the resident. The Community Association never receives any specific data.

Dan Dodson
Firewise Group Chair

Looking to the Future

The Firewise Group is in its 15th year. The addition of the Neighborhood Firewise Partners (Partners), in cooperation with the NRO, is the latest addition.

Leadership of the Firewise Group has primarily been by 12 volunteers since the 2020 covid shutdown. Currently there are 74 Firewise volunteers. Four are active in 3 work groups and 8 are active in 2 work groups not including the Partners. Some of them have held positions for over 7 years.

In the June Education-Training Work Group meeting a presentation and discussion reviewed the current status of the volunteers and work groups. An expanded presentation and discussion occurred at the Firewise Group meeting.

The result is a draft of how the Firewise Group organization might look in the future. It includes a revised Firewise Group objective and expanded work group information (See pages 3-4).

The proposal is to move to dual coordinator positions for the each function. This proposal would provide more coordinators (volunteers) sharing the duties. The Partners Group will create their preferences during training probably in late August.

Firewise Volunteer Clearing Crew News

Is it hot out there or what?! Well, the Crew is now officially on **"Siesta Time"** thanks to that heat. We'll be back in September when hopefully it will be much cooler.

Since our last report we've managed to mitigate a few more Level 3 areas of potential fire threats in our community. N11, behind Stockman Trail Dr. found us not only removing downed limbs behind homes but we also assisted the Community Association by clearing the drainage area of down limbs in that area. In N6, in the Level 3 area behind Trail Rider Way, we had our work cut out for us on a very warm morning. This willing group, with plenty of breaks, left plenty of piles of limbs to be removed.

Remember to do your part by checking the exterior of your homes and remove potential fuel for fire on your property. (Do not place yard waste or limbs in the Level 3 area- Put it out on the City's yard waste collection day.) Use care when using your grills (both for cooking and gas firepits.)

Stay safe and cool this summer.

Petra Garren
Firewise Clearing Crew Coordinator



Downed tree gone!

2023 Firewise Events

August 17, 8:30 am, New Resident Orientation, SCB
October 10, 9:30 am, Firewise Town Hall, SCB
October 27, 9:00 am, Home Ignition Zone Evaluator Training, Andice Room
November 16, , 8:30 am, New Resident Orientation, SCB

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Suggested Work Group Organization and Functions

Proposed new Firewise Group Objective:

The objective of the Firewise Group is to apply local solutions by encouraging homeowners to take responsibility for preparing their homes from the risk of wildfire.

The following are suggested short descriptions of each group, functions, and average monthly time needed.

Education-Training Work Group prepares materials for distribution to homeowners and develops materials for use with neighborhoods, clubs, and other Sun City groups. It prepares materials for internal use. It provides training for Home Ignition Zone Evaluators, Neighborhood Firewise Partners volunteers, and Landscape Vendor Training.

- Develop written guideline document

- Publicity - Co-Coordination & writers - 2-4 hr/mo

- Sun Rays

- Communication

- NRO Bulletin

- Publications

- Events - Co-Coordination

- Develop written guideline document

- Town Hall-Training – 6-8 hr/mo (Aug - Oct, December - February)

- develop new trainers

Firewise Clearing Crew is a volunteer group that participates in weekly workdays cutting vines and junipers (cedars) in the Level 3 fuel break common areas in coordination with the Common Area & Irrigation Superintendent. Training will be conducted for new volunteers. This is outside work. There will be limited activities in the summer.

- Co-Coordination - up to 10 hr/mo

- Develop written guideline document

- Develop duplicate leadership

- Maintain roster and coordinate with Volunteer co-managers

Home Ignition Zone Work Group is a group of trained volunteers conducting evaluations of the outside of homeowners house and property to determine the condition of landscaping and the house where embers from a wildfire could ignite a fire. Training is required.

- HIZ Co-Coordination – 1-2 hr/mo

- Develop written guideline document

- Coordinator and Backup Coordinator

- Receive HIZ requests

- Assign Evaluators

- Document completed evaluations

- Report status at Firewise Group meetings

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Renewal Work Group collects the data and information required to apply for the annual renewal. It creates the annual narrative document to provide a record of the progress the Firewise Group makes.

- Renewal Co-Coordinator - 1-2 hr/mo except Sep - mid Nov - 3-5 hr/mo
 - Develop structure
 - Develop procedures
 - Develop written guideline document
- Volunteer co-managers – 2-3 hr/mo **NEW**
 - Develop written guideline document
 - document new volunteers
 - update rosters
 - Firewise Group
 - HIZ Evaluators
 - Education-Training
 - Partners
 - Renewal
 - Clearing Crew – coordinate
 - Send updated Rosters as needed

Neighborhood Firewise Partners are neighborhood representatives ask to promote Firewise information and where to find more, promote the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Evaluations and Firewise Clearing Crew, promote Firewise events, if possible, attend Firewise meetings to provide input, gain information, and ask questions, etc., and review the Firewise Trumpet newsletter to keep up to date.

- Neighborhood Partners - 1-3 hr/mo
 - Part of Education-Training Work Group?
 - Structure?
 - Maintain a roster?
 - Training – probably late August
 - Develop written guideline document

If you have comments, suggestions, or questions send to:

Dan Dodson <dods911@suddenlink.net>
Paul Ohlenbusch <ole7734@suddenlink.net>

They will be shared with the leadership.