

What's Happening in Southwest Colorado?

What is FireWise?

FireWise is a national consortium of federal and private agencies formed in the 1990s to teach a new vision for land stewardship. Workshops and sophisticated technical support help communities plan a future where homes and businesses are built and maintained to survive wildland-urban interface fires. This allows firefighters with limited resources to concentrate on strategically important areas without making individual efforts to save certain homes.

Each community begins FireWise planning by defining local values and articulating what's important for the residents. Partnerships are built as individuals and agencies, homeowners and associations plan to face the very real possibilities of a wildland fire. For more information see the FireWise website at: www.firewise.org/

What's happening in Southwest Colorado ?

Following a FireWise conference held in Durango in April 2003, a group of local citizens formed a council to develop a vision for the community. The Durango Fire and Rescue Authority has been joined by representatives from the Colorado State Forest Service, San Juan Public Lands, San Juan Mountains Association, hazardous fuels reduction companies, the American Red Cross and local stakeholders. The FireWise Southwest Colorado Council is focusing efforts on education, grant writing, and community projects.



FireWise Southwest Colorado

FireWise Southwest Colorado is a citizen-based council created to promote wildfire preparedness, mitigation, and education. For more information e-mail:

firewiseswcolorado@yahoo.com

Or visit this website:

www.southwestcoloradofires.org

For more information, contact:

- Your local fire department
- Colorado State Forest Service
(970) 247-5250
www.colostate.edu/depts/CSFS/
- Firewise
www.firewise.org/
- Firewise Colorado
www.firewise.org/co/



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Community Efforts

Wildfire.

The word alone conjures frightening images of damage, destruction, and injury in an uncontrollable event.

Preparedness.

Knowledge and careful planning reduce anxiety and bring the situation under control.

FireWise of Southwest Colorado.

Where wildfire meets preparedness and healthy, natural communities flourish.

Get Involved with Your Community

What can I do?

There are two things everyone can do. Fire protection begins at home, so start there. Find out more about protecting your home and how to create defensible space. Then do it. Get involved with FireWise Southwest Colorado: attend a meeting, volunteer for on-the-ground projects or with community education.



The foundations of a FireWise community can guide you:

- **Plan.** Assess your property as if a fire were approaching. Look with fire's hungry eyes at everything around you, and decide how to stop its advances.
- **Prepare.** Don't leave your good planning on the desktop. Start the necessary work and set a schedule for completion.
- **Work with others.** Bring FireWise to your homeowners association. Encourage neighborhood preparedness.
- **Be responsible for yourself and your property.**
- **Build long- and short-term goals.** For example, clear brush around your house, while looking at future needs for improved road access.

How can I learn more? How can I get involved?

1. Start with our local FireWise Southwest Colorado Council. Information is available by e-mailing firewiseswcolorado@yahoo.com or on the web at www.southwestcoloradofires.org. Monthly meetings are open to everyone. Task forces need help on many fronts, and you don't have to be a firefighting professional to make a valuable contribution in shaping our future. Everyone is welcome.
2. Call the Colorado State Forest Service for a consultation at your property.
3. Attend a FireWise workshop.
4. Invite a speaker to your homeowner's meeting.
5. Get involved in local education efforts.
6. Check out hazardous fuels reduction services — see www.southwestcoloradofires.org for a list of local companies.



Remember that when wildfire arrives, it shows no respect for fences or property lines.