



The Ranch at Prescott

FIREWISE NEWS

The Height of Fire Season – Level 2 Fire restrictions in place

July 2017

NEW, the NFPA Firewise communities/USA program name has been changed to just “Firewise USA” and the tagline to “Residents Reducing Wildfire Risks”

At the end of May thousands of firefighters were battling a number of wildfires throughout the state, many of them ignited by lightning or people. Arizona had seen 858 wildfires through the end of May. Dry lightning sparked some of the biggest fires and with high winds and low humidity wildfires spread quickly; with over 205 square miles already consumed.

Closer to Home



The Prescott Lakes community received a real-life wake-up call from a fast-moving fire of grass and brush in the Estates neighborhood. The cause was from sparks generated by workers at a home under construction. Strong winds carried flames down to the pond adjacent to an existing home. A rapid response from the Prescott Fire Department and the Arizona department of fire management controlled the fire within 30 minutes. “This fire highlights the need for our community to be fully committed to the goals and methods involved in being Firewise in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) where homes are intermingled with flammable vegetation” said Russ LaFayette of the Lakes Firewise Committee.

A wake-up call for The Ranch

The Goodwin Fire 1000 acres, 24 hours later 4000 acres, 24 hours later 22000 acres. Fast moving wind driven fire, massive evacuations, lost property. Mayer saved because of a 2016 Firewise safety mitigation program. The Ranch may not survive this type of fire in its present fire safety form. Residents need to take action before a disaster strikes. **Reduce Vegetation!**



“Governor Doug Ducey today declared a State of Emergency in Yavapai County in response to the Goodwin Fire. The fire has burned more than 25,000 acres, forcing evacuations and the closure of portions of State Route 69. More than 1200 emergency personnel are involved in the fire suppression response”. Costing millions of state dollars.



Please Help Support the Ranch Firewise Day

August 13, 2017

Highland Center 1375 S. Walker Road

Come join your neighbors from 11 am to 3 pm and

- *Discover how to protect your home*
- *Learn how to make our community safe*
 - *Understand the Firewise Program*
 - *Hear fire professional guest speakers*
- *Jeff Whitney Arizona State Forester*
- *Dennis Light Prescott Fire Chief*

A complimentary BBQ Lunch Ticket will be issued to the first 100 who RSVP and there will be a two-ticket limit per household. Please e-mail your reservation request along with your name to Bill Bielfeldt at wrb1@cablone.net and indicate "Lunch Ticket" in the subject box. A lunch ticket will be sent back. If after receiving a lunch ticket, it will not be used, please e-mail it back or send a note indicating such to Bill at wrb1@cablone.net. This is so the ticket can be reissued. Remember, only the first 100 will receive the free lunch so respond quickly. Also, please bring your ticket to the Firewise event.

Informational Articles Paul Scrivens (Firewise Committee chair) has just published a set of 3 articles in the Daily Courier entitled "Protecting yourself against wildfire" They can be found at

<https://www.dcourier.com/news/2017/apr/07/column-protecting-yourself-against-wildfire-part-1/>

<https://www.dcourier.com/news/2017/may/12/protecting-yourself-against-wildfire-part-2/>

<https://www.dcourier.com/news/2017/jun/16/column-protecting-yourself-against-wildfire-action/>

Firewise, what not to do. Firewise recommends how to protect your home from a wildfire, but it doesn't tell what not to do. We have seen a few lots that have been clear cut, or close too. We have heard owners requesting all trees and brush be removed, which has the negative effect on lot appearance, privacy, and soil stability during the heavy monsoon and winter rains. The HOA council have requested that an extra step in the Firewise process be implemented. In that someone reviews the mitigation plan with contractors just before they action the work. They will be asked not to remove more than 70% of surface brush, and only

remove dead trees or those violating the Firewise density requirements. Those owners who want to handle their own clearing and tree removal outside of the Firewise program will be referred to and supported by the ARC, and advised of the same limitations as stated for Firewise. We hope that this minor adjustment will balance the program and make it acceptable to all interests. All Firewise or private mitigation or tree removal requests should be routed through HOAMCO first.

When Selecting a contractor. It is difficult to get a contractor between May and September, as many of their employees are fighting wildfires. It is not only difficult to get a quote or work scheduled, but the prices are generally higher. There are also many fire restrictions during the summer months, when spark generating equipment cannot be used. We also have some of our listed contractors refusing to quote at all during this period. We have therefor been recommending and encouraging the work be done during the winter season (October – April) this includes any maintenance contracts. If you have been contacted by HOAMCO identifying your lot as a fire hazard to your neighbor the Firewise team still recommends you target any mitigation work during the winter season.

Maintenance programs are essential. The Ranch brush grows back very fast if not treated with herbicide. Based on experience it needs to be trimmed back annually. As it is new growth it can be removed easily and in a short time, if left it will grow back to its original dense position in 5-7 years. Again, the best time to do maintenance is during the winter season when the brush is dormant. Ask your contractor about maintenance.

Reducing wildfire Risk. *Maintaining a fire safety property in the Ranch is the responsible thing to do. Homeowners have shown a reluctance to report overgrown adjacent lots based on potential neighbor ill-will. Lot owners only lose a few trees and bushes in a fire; creating very little incentive in maintaining a fire safe condition. **The bottom line is that homeowners are responsible for their own wildfire safety; if you do nothing your home and belongings are at stake.***

Information Resources To find out more, the Firewise tab on The Ranch at Prescott HOA website is a great place to start. Please visit us at <http://www.ranchatprescotthoa.org/>, or contact any of the Firewise Committee members.