



Kensington Emergency Preparedness Report

August 2026

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Kensington's emergency preparedness initiatives continue to advance across multiple program areas as existing programs expand. This month's report highlights progress in Firewise renewal preparation, CERT organizational development, Hazardous Vegetation Removal Reimbursement (HVRR) program performance, the Kensington Ember Exclusion Program (KEEP), the emerging Red Flag Ready Awareness Program, and several initiatives aimed at strengthening community-wide readiness and risk reduction.

Firewise

Annual Renewal Preparation and Community Data Collection

Kensington Firewise communities will need to submit their applications for renewal recognition in mid-November. To support that effort, a Firewise lead meeting is planned for late September to walk neighborhood leaders through the renewal process and clarify expectations for documentation and submission.

A survey tool has also been developed for Firewise leads to distribute to their neighbors in order to gather feedback that will strengthen renewal applications. In addition to supporting Firewise recognition, this information will help demonstrate community investment and participation in wildfire risk reduction for future grant applications.

CERT

El Cerrito-Kensington CERT continues to build organizational capacity ahead of its next training cycle. A new CERT training class is scheduled to begin in October, and confirmation emails have already been sent to residents who registered for the course.

CERT leadership development is also progressing, with the steering committee taking shape and officers identified to complete the organization's state and federal filings. In parallel, a new CERT website has been developed and will be launched as a resource for residents to find upcoming training opportunities and stay informed about CERT-related news and activities.

Hazardous Vegetation Removal Reimbursement (HVRR)

Completed Projects and Reimbursement Processing

Program implementation continues to show strong progress. As of this report, 64 percent of approved projects from the last funding cycle have been completed, and reimbursement requests have been processed in less than two months.

Interest in Future Funding Cycle

Community interest in the program remains high. Residents are already asking when the next funding cycle will open, indicating continued demand for hazardous vegetation mitigation assistance and ongoing public interest in defensible space investment.

Kensington Ember Exclusion Program (KEEP)

The first set of field measurements has been submitted, and mesh fabrication is now underway for the initial batch of validated applicants. The program will also reopen appointments to continue site validation for the remaining two-thirds of applicants who have not yet completed that step.

Red Flag Ready Awareness Program

Development of the Red Flag Ready Awareness Program is continuing. Subcommittee members have now been provided access to the flag materials so they can support activation in the event that the National Weather Service issues a Red Flag Warning.

A formal deployment protocol is still under development. Firewise leads and CERT volunteers will be invited to participate in flag deployment, and training will be provided to ensure implementation is coordinated and consistent.

Program Development

Eucalyptus Risk Reduction

An agenda item was brought to the KCSD Board recommending development of a eucalyptus risk awareness and mitigation program. This concept remains in an early stage and is intended to begin discussion around whether there is Board consensus to recognize and address the hazards associated with eucalyptus as a distinct area of risk reduction work.

Hazardous Vegetation Removal Reimbursement Grant Program Updates

Potential changes to the HVRR program are being considered to improve its impact and service to the community. These discussions are intended to help ensure that future funding cycles are as effective and responsive as possible.

Earthquake Preparedness

Individual, household, and community-wide earthquake preparedness initiatives are currently in development. These efforts may also create opportunities to incorporate CERT coordination into future preparedness education and response planning.

Evacuation and Emergency Readiness Initiatives

Additional evacuation and emergency readiness initiatives are also in development. The Emergency Preparedness Committee continues to provide valuable insights that are helping to shape future drills, exercises, and other activities intended to improve resident readiness.