



THE FIRE PLUG

Spring Edition | 2024
www.kensingtonfire.org



PAPER SHREDDING

Saturday April 27th 10 am - 12 pm
1 LAWSON ROAD - UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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EVACUATION IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

COMING THIS SUMMER

www.kensingtonfire.org/zone

Evacuation Preparedness Information To Be Mailed Out To Each Home

The Kensington Fire Protection District is committed to enhancing our community's resilience against the ever-present threat of wildfires and ensuring our preparedness for potential evacuations. In light of this, we are initiating a comprehensive campaign, designed to equip every household within Kensington with critical information necessary for an effective community-wide evacuation.

In the coming weeks, each residence will receive a campaign mailer, a critical component of our wildfire and evacuation preparedness efforts. This mailer contains information that is specific to each of the six different zones within Kensington. For example, residents living on Lake Drive will get a different enclosure than those living one block to the west. The enclosures are intended to provide residents with:

- A map to indicate the zone boundary,
- Insights into the specific wildfire risks pertinent to the zone,
- Information regarding the designated zone number,
- Reminders for assembling go bags and establishing a concrete evacuation route, including planning for shelter outside the affected area.

We urge every resident to carefully review the contents of this mailer and engage in proactive preparation measures. Together, through informed and collective action, we can significantly reduce the impact of wildfires and ensure our community's readiness for evacuation should the need arise.

STAY WILDFIRE AWARE WITH THESE CRITICAL TOOLS

Sign up for all of the following tools to stay informed of potential emergencies in Kensington.

RED FLAG WARNING EMAIL www.kensingtonfire.org/redflag



Get an email when Red Flag Days are issued by the National Weather Service. This email contains reminders to be aware and to prepare when wildfire risk is heightened.

Visit www.kensingtonfire.org/redflag or scan the QR Code.



COUNTY COMMUNITY WARNING SYSTEM www.cwsalerts.com



Get alerts when an emergency is impacting your neighborhood. These notifications are coordinated between our local First Responders and the County Emergency Services Division.

Visit www.cwsalerts.com or scan the QR Code.



AGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM www.nixle.com



Get information directly from Police and Fire through this app. Nixle is a tool used by our local departments to communicate directly to subscribers.

Text your Zip Code to 888777 from your mobile device.



Wildcat Firewise Reaches 1 Year Milestone

Wildcat Firewise has made significant strides towards enhancing wildfire safety and community preparedness within Kensington. Since its inception, Wildcat Firewise has diligently worked to engage and educate residents through a series of impactful activities and events.

Throughout the year, Wildcat Firewise has successfully hosted multiple educational webinars via Zoom, focusing on vital topics such as home hardening and understanding the need to identify and improve evacuation routes. These sessions have been crucial in fostering a community-wide understanding of wildfire risks and the necessary precautions to improve emergency preparedness and fire prevention. Additionally, the community came together during a series of open houses for their inaugural launch party. Wildcat Firewise applied for two community chipping days and were approved through the Contra Costa County Measure X Wildfire Mitigation program. These events enabled residents to reduce their combustible fuel loads around their homes.

The effectiveness and enthusiasm generated by Wildcat Firewise have had a ripple effect, inspiring the establishment of a second Firewise community — Maybeck Firewise. Situated at the end of Purdue and encompassing homes along Garden Drive and Dewey Road, Maybeck Firewise has further inspired additional surrounding streets to pursue Firewise recognition. Maybeck Firewise recently hosted a networking mixer, drawing together members from various parts of Kensington interested in developing additional Firewise communities and enhancing the network of support and resources among existing ones.

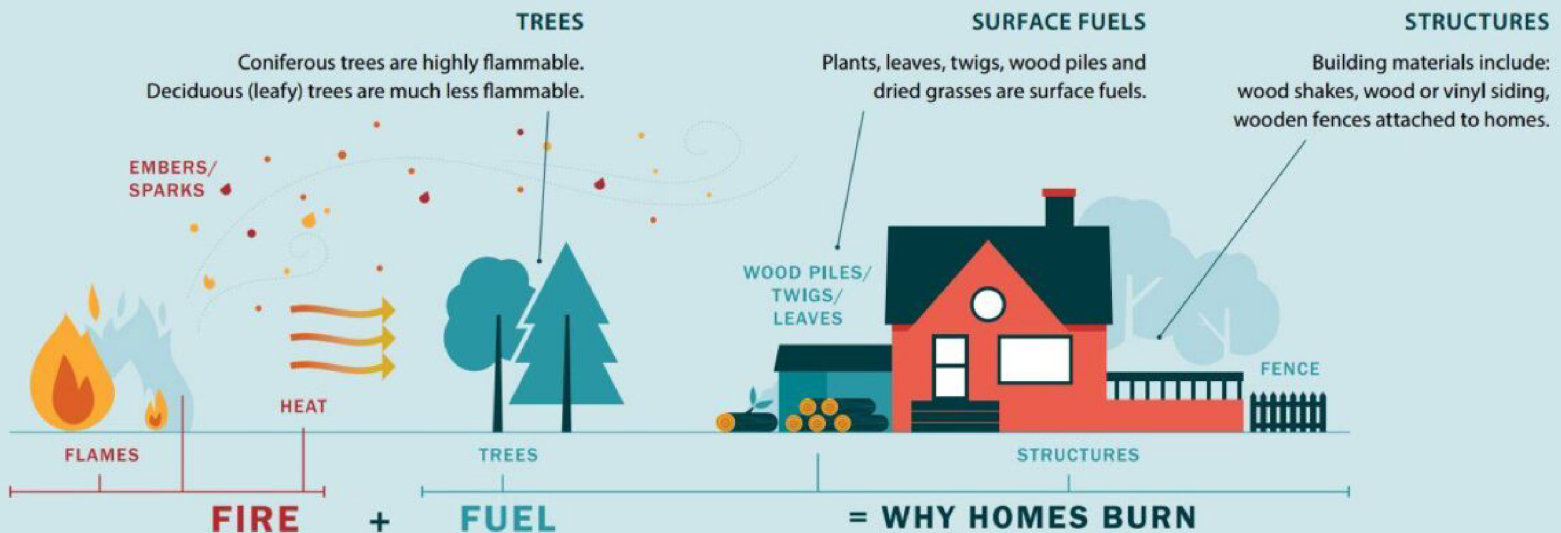
The activities and achievements of our Firewise communities, both fully recognized and aspiring, underscore the power of collective effort and the importance of being proactive in our approach to wildfire preparedness. If you are interested in learning more about establishing a Firewise community contact Johny Valenzuela, the Kensington Fire Protection District's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, at prepare@kensingtonfire.org.

HOME HARDENING

Embers are responsible for most damage during wildfires. They can accumulate on your home, deck, or porch and ignite plants, mulch, leaves, fencing, or furniture. They can also be forced into gaps in the home (e.g., attic vents or an open or broken window) and burn the home from the inside out. When this happens, there can be little damage to the surrounding vegetation, leaving people puzzled as to what caused the home to burn. Hardening your home can help increase its likelihood of survival when wildfire strikes.

Embers cause the majority of wildfire home ignitions.

HOW HOMES CATCH FIRE



Ember Storm

Embers are small pieces of burning material that can travel more than a mile ahead of a wildfire. They can create spot fires when they land on combustible materials, such as leaves in your gutter or plants next to your house and under your windows. Combustible materials should be at least 5 ft. from structures.

Radiant Heat

Radiant heat generated from burning structures or plants can be hot enough to ignite a house without direct flame contact. This is particularly challenging in densely populated areas, where the heat from one burning home can ignite the next.

Direct Flame

Depending on time and exposure, direct flame contact can ignite your home. The flaming front of a wildfire is often not hot enough to ignite a house, but plants around your house and under your windows can ignite combustible siding, or break glass allowing the fire to enter the house.

IBHS Ember Storm Test Highlights Video

The Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety's Research Center conducted a wildfire test to demonstrate vulnerabilities of a typical home during an ember storm. To view the video, scan this QR code with your mobile device or visit, www.kensingtonfire.org/emberstorm



HOME HARDENING CHECKLIST*

The California Building Code (Chapter 7A) went into effect in 2008 and requires certain fire-resistant measures, including exterior construction materials used for roof coverings, vents, exterior walls, and decks. Although it applies to new construction of residential and commercial buildings in designated fire hazard severity zones. An analysis of the homes in the path of the 2018 Camp Fire demonstrated the effectiveness of these measures. Eighteen percent of homes built before 2008 were undamaged, compared to 51 percent of the homes built after 2008. Based on California Building Code Chapter 7A and the recommendations of CALFIRE and other fire prevention experts, here are measures you can take to harden your home. Use the following pages to assess and improve your home hardening.

START FROM THE TOP

ROOF

- ☐ Is your roof covering made of Class A material to prevent ignition? Replace wood or shingle roofs with non-flammable materials like asphalt, clay, metal or slate.

RIDGE VENT

- ☐ Add a metal baffle to minimize embers with enough energy to cause ignition. Replace plastic ridge vents with metal and metal flashing.

SOLAR PANELS

- ☐ Minimize debris accumulation under and next to solar panels.

GABLE VENT

- ☐ Replace with ember and flame-resistant vent to minimize embers with enough energy to cause ignitions. Install vents with non-combustible screens less than 1/8 inch openings.

SKYLIGHTS

- ☐ Replace plastic skylight with multi-paned glass with tempered glass outer pane. If the skylight opens, install a metal screen on the inside. If the screen is non-metal, replace it with a metal screen. Screens are needed only on openable skylights.

GUTTERS

- ☐ Limit accumulation of ignitable debris in gutters by installing a non-combustible gutter cover. Add metal flashing if the fascia does not cover the roof sheathing. Prevent the accumulation of embers at the fascia sheathing intersection.

SECURE THE SIDES TO PROTECT INSIDE

CLADDING (SIDING)



Replace exterior wall covering with noncombustible material for the bottom 2 ft (from the ground); add metal flashing to protect the bottom edge of the sheathing to prevent wind-blown debris and local fuels from igniting the wall.

EAVE/ SOFFIT, CRAWL SPACE VENTS & OTHER OPENINGS



Enclose the eave with noncombustible material and seal around penetrations with fire caulking. Replace vents with ember and flame-resistant vents to minimize embers and ignitions under the structure.

WINDOWS



Add metal screens to minimize embers with enough energy to cause ignitions. Replace wooden frames and single-pane glass with double-pane windows, with one pane being tempered glass and noncombustible frames.

EXTERIOR DOORS



Install metal door jamb kits, metal thresholds with metal kick plates and metal door bottoms. Replace wooden doors with metal doors including frames and thresholds to limit ember ignition to the door and frame.

GARAGE DOORS



Add metal flashing at the base of the framing for the first 6 inches going as close to the ground as possible. If the garage door is not metal, go over with metal flashing around the bottom of the door on both inside and outside for the first 6 inches.

SLIDING DOORS



Install a non-wood-containing slider with dual-pane windows and at least one tempered glass pane, and a metal screen to limit the door and frame ember ignition.

HOME HARDENING CHECKLIST Continued

WORK YOUR WAY OUT AND AROUND

DECK



Replace walking surface deck boards with noncombustible deck boards for the first 12 inches away from the residence to prevent ignition of the deck and limit the spread of fire to the primary structure. Replace the entire deck with a noncombustible option if possible.

PATIO FURNITURE



Replace the furniture with noncombustible framing material or move away 5 ft. to prevent flames from igniting the residence. Place cushions inside the residence before egress.

FENCES



Replace with a noncombustible option for at least the first 8 ft. from the primary structure to prevent ignition of the combustible fence and spread of fire to the home.

AWNINGS



Introduce a noncombustible barrier/section between the combustible attachment and the primary structure or replace it with non-combustible material to limit the spread of fire to the house. Remove vegetation and have a 2 ft. open space separate from the primary structure.



FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

Visit our site to learn about Fire Hazard Mitigation, Defensible Space Zones, Inspections, and more.

Additional information can be found at the El Cerrito-Kensington Fire Department's website at www.kensingtonfire.org/fireprevention. Or, you can scan the QR Code below with your mobile device.



HOME HARDENING + DEFENSIBLE SPACE RESOURCES

Learn about the programs available for home hardening and defensible space.

MEASURE X - WILDFIRE MITIGATION

www.kensingtonfire.org/measurex



The Measure X Wildfire Mitigation Program enables county residents to apply for funding for Community Chipping Days and other services.

Visit www.kensingtonfire.org/measurex or scan the QR Code.



DIABLO FIRE SAFE COUNCIL www.diablofiresafe.org



Diablo Fire Safe Council offers up to \$5,000 in cost-sharing assistance to organizations or groups of individuals to hire contractors to reduce fuel loads.

Visit www.diablofiresafe.org/programs or scan the QR Code.



BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DIST. www.baaqmd.gov



This pilot program provides free chipping services to qualifying properties within the County.

Visit www.baaqmd.gov or scan the QR Code.



Paper Shredding Event

Kensington Fire Protection District will host a paper shredding event on Saturday, April 27th, 2024, from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. This free event is for Kensington residents to learn more about making their homes and communities safer. **Please note the location of this event is the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley at 1 Lawson Road in Kensington (north parking lot).**

There will not be a pharmaceutical collection during this event. KPD expects to host the pharmaceutical collection in October 2024.

We do not accept any household hazardous waste. It is important not to flush your unwanted medications down the toilet as they will pollute our drinking water and ground soil. For more information about this event, please visit the Kensington Fire website:

www.kensingtonfire.org

CPR & First Aid Training

The 2024 schedule for CPR/First Aid Training is posted. The El Cerrito/Kensington Fire Department offers this training to the general public. Get certified or renew your certification.

For more information, please visit our website.

<https://www.kensingtonfire.org/cpr-first-aid-training>

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KENSINGTON
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

COMMUNITY SAFETY EVENT

PAPER SHREDDING

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BERKELEY
ONE LAWSON ROAD KENSINGTON**

**SATURDAY APRIL 27TH
10:00am-12:00pm**

INFO: WWW.KENSINGTONFIRE.ORG