



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Program benefits

Get a framework for action

Meeting the criteria for becoming a Firewise USA® site helps communities get organized and find direction for their wildfire safety efforts. Like the first rungs on a ladder, the criteria help get a community started toward annual, systematic action to reduce their risks from brush, grass and forest fires.

Learn about wildfire

As people go through the process, they learn about wildfire risks in the community and the simple things they can do to reduce them. They connect with experts – local fire fighters, state forestry professionals, and national researchers – to continue to learn about fire and find resources to accomplish fire-safe actions.

Get a peace of mind

People who work with experts to learn about wildfire and take action start to see results quickly. Knowing that they are using the best information available and actually taking steps to reduce the risk of damage from fire helps people start to feel safer in their environment and in their homes. Having a plan for what to do in the event of a fire helps people become calmer and more prepared to act quickly.

Community-building

As neighbors get together to do work, often meeting one another for the first time, they build a stronger bond with each other. Activity can help rally people to a common cause for the good of the neighborhood. This strengthening of community ties can benefit residents in many ways, and is especially helpful during an emergency.

Build citizen pride

While the work can be fun, it isn't always easy. Neighbors work very hard in communities to remove brush and debris, clean up common areas, and dispose of green waste. They are rightly proud when they achieve national recognition for their efforts.

Get publicity

The program provides communities with metal signs, a plaque and other materials that can be presented publicly to honor their status as a Firewise USA® recognition site. These recognition ceremonies are great ways to shine the spotlight on community efforts. News media find this to be a great story to cover,

and the national program features community stories regularly on the website and in its publications. All this publicity results not only in satisfaction for the residents involved, but also provides one more way to reach large numbers of people with information about wildfire safety.

Access to funding and assistance

Preference is sometimes given to Firewise USA® sites over other candidates when allocations of grant money are made for wildfire safety or fuel mitigation. The reason is that there are invariably more requests than available funds when grants are available through state or federal agencies. If requests are equally worthy, some officials tend to have more confidence in communities that have demonstrated the foresight of becoming a recognized Firewise USA® site.

Insurance discount for USAA members in certain states

The Departments of Insurance in the states of California, Colorado, Texas, Arizona, Oregon, New Mexico and Utah have approved filings by USAA to [give homeowners insurance discounts](#) to USAA members living in communities recognized by the Firewise USA® program.