**Lakehills Fire Safe Council**

**Community Bulletin**

**Promoting Fire Safe Communities**

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**August 13th Meeting - You’re Invited!**

We are fortunate to host dedicated and enthusiastic speakers from El Dorado County’s Health and Human Services this month. Their vast experience provides info about county resources, preparedness, animal services, emergency planning, the new county-wide referral system 2-1-1 and more! You don’t want to miss this meeting! See you Tuesday night, August 13th at 7 pm at EDHFD station #85. Bring guests; invite your neighbors; this educational info will benefit all!

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**Firewise Talk turned to Action - by NFPA’s Marie Snow, 6/20/19 (edited)**

The Firewise USA® program is thriving in Ashland, Oregon. The city boasts one of the highest numbers of Firewise sites in the country. To learn more about how Ashland continues to keep people participating in wildfire risk reduction, I found out it’s the residents themselves. Ashland is a place where neighbors talk to each other face-to-face. The Firewise program got its start in Ashland in 2011, after a wildfire in 2010 destroyed 11 homes within just 45 minutes in an area of the city that wasn’t thought of as high-risk. “Firewise was a grassroots way to get the focus on the residents themselves, a bottom-up approach instead of top-down….“ says Alison Lerch of Ashland Fire & Rescue. Within the first year of introducing the Firewise USA program, Ashland Fire & Rescue was able to get seven communities on board. The interest has grown year after year and now the city has 35 active communities. One common challenge that communities across the country have is how to deal with the neighbor who isn’t interested in participating. In Ashland, residents have dealt with this simply by not giving up on those residents who aren’t participating. They continue to do the work they can around their own homes and find friendly ways to offer education and support to those who haven’t yet taken action. One tool that has driven a lot of on-the-ground action is Ashland Fire Rescue’s Individual Home Assessment program. The fire department offers this service to homeowners for free. Brian Hendrix from Ashland Fire & Rescue performs approximately one hundred home assessments a year. “Being one-on-one with a homeowner is the most effective tool we have because you are taking all the science and information that is out there and applying it directly to them. They tend to walk away with a better understanding of the actions they can take.” Word-of-mouth about this service has kept Hendrix busy and a visit to one home often sparks interest from neighbors. “Once we go out to one property, neighbors tend to follow,” says Hendrix.

**Local residents:** See Page 2 for how to request your “Advisory Consultation”

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**PG&E Power Shutoff Program**

Are you informed about PG&E’s Public Safety Power Shutoff Program? They are expanding their outreach, trying to get information to you. Besides increasing the inspections of the electric infrastructure and hardening the electric system, they are working with consumers so we are prepared for 48 hour—or longer—power outages. Are you using battery dependent technology? Utilize a planning checklist for those using oxygen, breathing machines or power wheelchairs: **<<CLICK HERE<<**. If you have a generator, do you perform safety checks before operating to prevent safety hazards? Learn about generators here: [www.pge.com/backupsolution](http://www.pge.com/backupsolution). Update your contact info so PG&E can provide wildfire updates, pending power shutoff alerts, PG&E’s enhanced vegetation management news and view their wildfire safety plan: [www.pge.com/wildfiresafety](http://www.pge.com/wildfiresafety). BE INFORMED!

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Lakehills Fire Safe Council is a community organization. Join and Email us at: lakehillsfiresafecouncil@gmail.com
Research has shown that sloppy landscaping can significantly increase a home’s chance of going up in flames during a firestorm. Have your residence reviewed now to reduce risk and loss from wildfire; don’t wait for an official inspection to identify any problem areas. The Fire Safe Council has several Cal Fire-trained evaluators who volunteer to review the 100 feet surrounding your home. Creating and maintaining individual defensible space is critical for each resident in the neighborhood. Acknowledging we live in a high fire risk area is the first step, the second is taking action. Those who have mature landscaping may not realize how much dead wood & branches are hiding in the greenery or how close to the roof those tree branches have grown. Is your firewood stored away from your house or leaning up against the siding? No need to clear your gutters in the summer as it never rains, right? The fact remains that debris in the gutters will be found by a flying ember and start a new fire. The 2019 El Dorado County Vegetation Ordinance, EDHFD and Cal Fire are all responding to the necessity of prevention. Residents need to be compliant with defensible space laws. It is your responsibility and the Fire Safe Council can help with suggestions and priorities. Email lakehillsfiresafecouncil@gmail.com

The Lakehills Fire Safe Council posts on NextDoor (to the LakeForest group) and has a Facebook page. Please find us at www.facebook.com/LakehillsFireSafe. Monthly meetings are open to all.