

Understanding the Evolving Firewise Guidelines in Oakmont Village

A Presentation by the Firewise Task Force

Summary: Being Firewise in Oakmont

Jurisdiction	Coverage	Applicable Regulation(s)	Requirements
Oakmont Village Association	All of Oakmont	Firewise Landscape Policy (FLP)	Good Defensible Space (DS) No Home Hardening (Except New Fences & Decks)
City of Santa Rosa Local Responsibility Area (LRA)	Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area (WUIFA)	Chapter 9-30/32 on Hazardous Vegetation and Fuels Management	Weaker DS than the FLP No Home Hardening
State of California State Responsibility Area (SRA)	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in the LRA	14 CCR §1298 (Pending) for Zone Zero in 3 Years for Existing Homes	Stronger DS than the FLP No Home Hardening (Except Fences and Outbuildings)
Insurance Industry	By Carrier and Wildfire Risk Score	CA's Sustainable Insurance Strategy and Safer from Wildfires Program Guided by IBHS Research	Defensible Space & Home Hardening Requirements Determined by Carrier



FIREWISE USA®
Residents Reducing Wildfire Risks

Coverage: All of Oakmont

Firewise Landscape Policy (FLP) Highlights:

- ✓ Good Defensible Space but no Home Hardening
(AC policies require noncombustible materials for new fencing in Zone Zero and all new decking)
- ✓ 0-5' Zone: No "Do Not Plants"; no wood or rubber mulches; keep shrubs healthy and maintained; keep roof/gutters clear of debris
- ✓ 0-30' Zone: Keep tree branches trimmed 5' from the home/roof and 10' from the chimney
- ✓ Entire Property: Remove dead branches from shrubs and trees; no fuel ladders under trees; limb trees 6' up or one-third the height from the ground; no junipers; no gorilla hair or rubber mulch; no firewood or other combustible materials within 30' of structures; cut wildland grasses to 4"

Additional Information:

- Firewise Landscape Policy <https://oakmontvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SECOND-AMENDED-FIREWISE-LANDSCAPE-POLICY.3.pdf>
- Understanding the Firewise Landscape Policy <https://oakmontvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Understanding-the-FLP.pdf>
- Do Not Plant List <https://oakmontvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Oakmont-Do-Not-Plant-List-3.pdf>
- Do Not Plant List Photo Guide <https://oakmontvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/PDF-Photo-Do-Not-Plant-3-19-21-copy.pdf>

Coverage: Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area (WUIFA) expanded in 2026 to include High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs)

WUIFA Highlights:

- ✓ Weaker Defensible Space than the FLP and no Home Hardening
- ✓ Specific guidelines for Trees, Non-Native Hazardous Vegetation, Mulch and Ground Coverings, and Defensible Space

Additional Information:

- Santa Rosa WUIFA <https://www.srcity.org/596/Wildland-Urban-Interface>
- Coverage map <https://maps.srcity.org/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=Fire.Parcels>
- Applicable Codes:
 - Chapter 9-32 Hazardous Vegetation and Fuels Management
<https://ecode360.com/45177649>
 - California Code of Regulation Title 14 Section 1299.3
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/california/14-CCR-1299.03>
 - Public Resources Code Section 4291
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=4291.&lawCode=PRC

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area

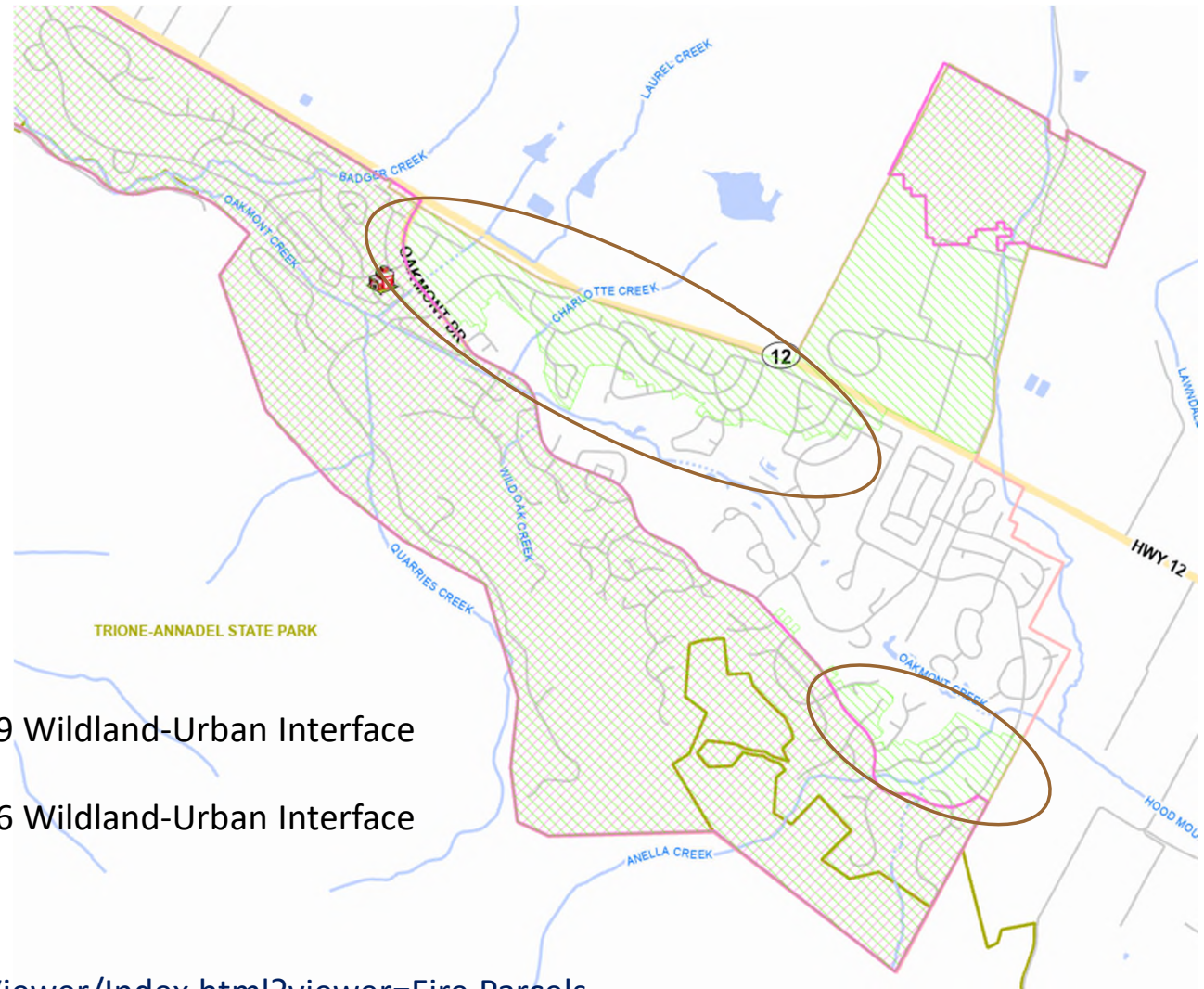
The two newly-added areas Northeast of Oakmont Drive include High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

If any portion of a Sub-HOA is in a High or Very High FHSZ, the entire Sub-HOA is included in the new WUI.

Welcome to the WUI
(Effective 02 July 2026):

- ❖ Brookgreen
- ❖ Fairfield
- ❖ Oak Vista
- ❖ Riven Rock
- ❖ Rockgreen
- ❖ Singing Brook
- ❖ The Meadows
- ❖ Valleygreen

-  2009 Wildland-Urban Interface
-  2026 Wildland-Urban Interface



<https://maps.srcity.org/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=Fire.Parcels>

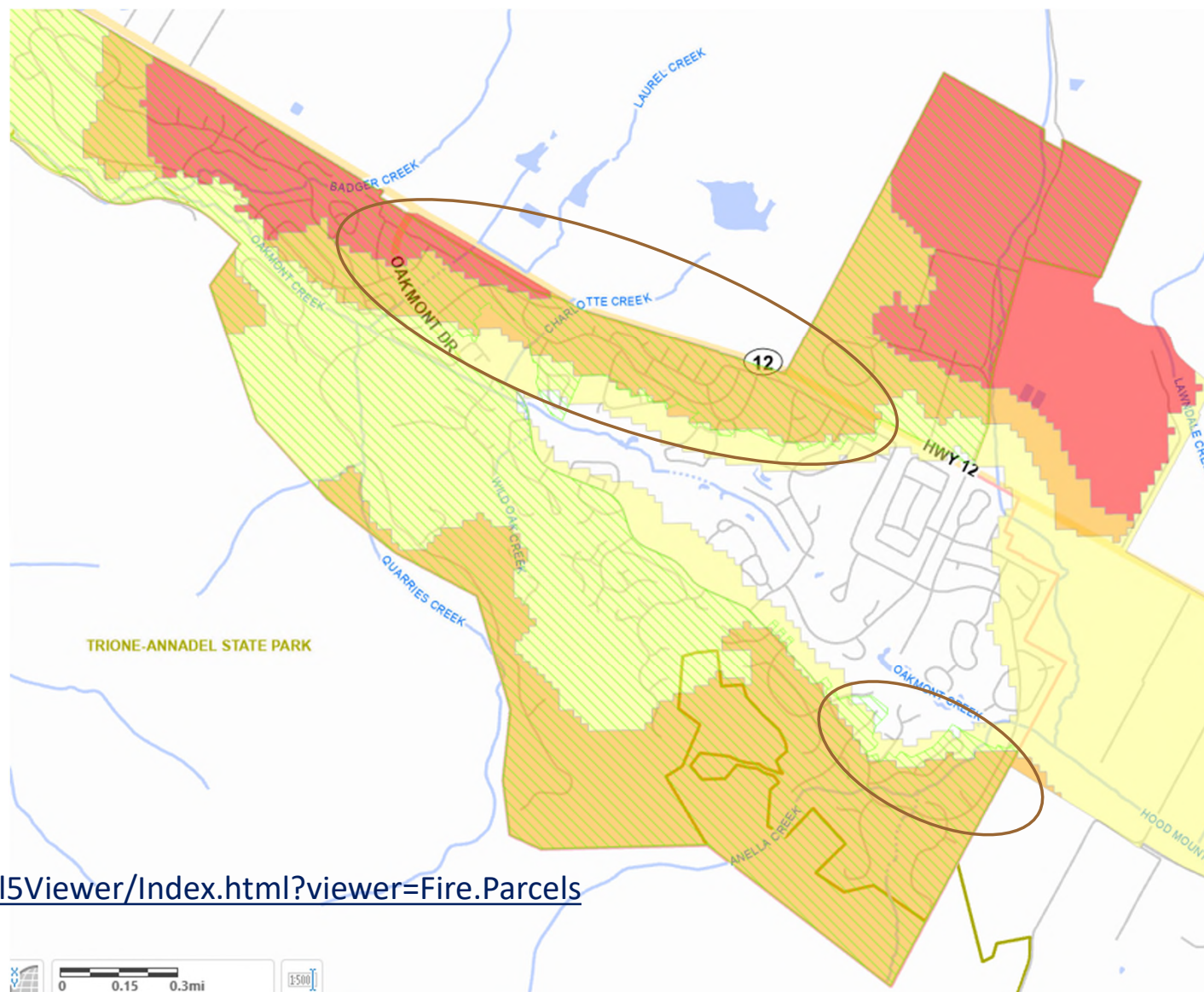
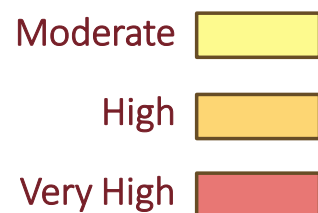
Click on + “Plus” Sign for Boundary Layers to View

FHSZs in the New WUIFA

Areas designated as High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in 2025 by the State Fire Marshall are now included in Santa Rosa's WUIFA.

Moderate and undesignated FHSZ areas are not included in Santa Rosa's WUIFA...

... but neither is Coffey Park.



<https://maps.srcity.org/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=Fire.Parcels>

State Responsibility Area (SRA)



Coverage: Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in Santa Rosa's LRA

Proposed Zone Zero Regulation Highlights:

- ✓ Stronger Defensible Space than the FLP but no Home Hardening (except for noncombustible fencing and outbuildings in Zone Zero)
- ✓ Regulations for California Code of Regulations Title 14 Section 1298 being recommended by the CAL FIRE Zone Zero Regulatory Advisory Committee for approval by the Board
- ✓ To become effective in 3 years for existing homes once approved

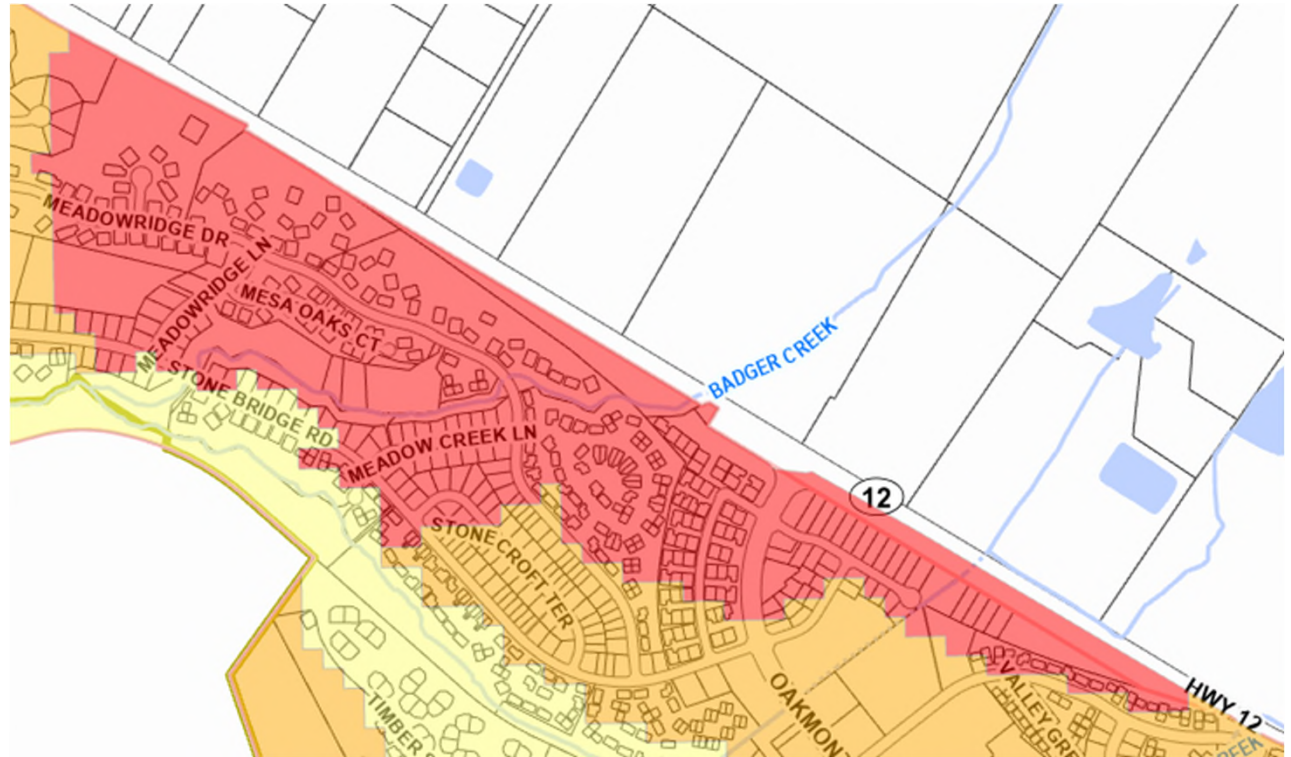
Additional Information:

- Coverage map <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones>
- Zone Zero Regulatory Advisory Committee <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/defensible-space-zones-0-1-and-2> (For the current recommendation see the "Zone Zero Rule Plead Summary and Rule Text" document for the most recent meeting)

Very High FHSZ in Oakmont

Sub-HOAs in California's Very High FHSZ (Not Verified by Address):

- ❖ Aspen Meadows (Most)
- ❖ Brookgreen (About Half)
- ❖ Meadowcreek (Very Small)
- ❖ Meadowgreen #2 (Very Small)
- ❖ Meadowridge (All)
- ❖ Meadowstone (Very Small)
- ❖ Mesa Oaks (All)
- ❖ Pleasant Vista (About Half)
- ❖ Quail Run (Most)
- ❖ The Meadows (All)



<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones>

<https://maps.srcity.org/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=Fire.Parcels>

Click on + "Plus" Sign for Boundary Layers to View

DRAFT Title 14 § 1298 Recommendations

Will apply to the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in Oakmont

Proposed **Zone Zero*** Regulation Highlights (as of 04/23/26):



- ✓ Clear all combustible debris, including on roofs and in gutters, and under attached decks, balconies, stairs and pergolas (Similar to FLP)
- ✓ Trees to have no dead branches and no ladder fuels (limbed 6' up or one-third the height), and to be trimmed 5' above roofs, 10' from chimneys, 1' from walls and under eaves (Also Similar to FLP)
- ✓ No vegetation permitted in the "Safety Zone" that is under eaves or 1' from structures, within 2' of windows, doors and vents, and within 5' of attached decks, stairs and pergolas
- ✓ Beyond the "Safety Zone" well-maintained non-woody plants must be:
 - Less than 3" tall or...
 - Up to 18" tall if less than one square foot in area and spaced 1.5 times the height of tallest plant or...
 - Up to 18" tall in noncombustible 5-gallon maximum pots if spaced 1.5 times their height
- ✓ Combustible fences and gates shall not be attached to a home
- ✓ Fences and gates attached to or coming within 1' of the home shall have a 5' noncombustible span
- ✓ Firewood and combustible outbuildings are not allowed

* Note: There are no CAL FIRE requirements in the LRA for Zone 1 (5-30') and Zone 2 (30-100').

The Change: California's Sustainable Insurance Strategy allows forward-looking rate increases provided carriers also offer discounts for mitigations under the state's Safer from Wildfire program

Coverage: Varies by carrier's assigned Wildfire Risk Score

California's Safer from Wildfire Program Highlights:

Note: Insurance companies may have more stringent requirements

- ✓ Stronger Defensible Space than the FLP combined with strong Home Hardening
- ✓ Defensible Space: 5' ember-resistant zone, including fences; no vegetation or debris under decks; no combustible structures or outbuildings within 30' of the home
- ✓ Home Hardening: Class-A fire rated roof; 1/8" noncombustible vents; noncombustible 6" at the bottom of exterior walls; enclosed eaves; multi-paned tempered glass windows or shutters

Additional Information:

- California's Sustainable Insurance Strategy <https://www.insurance.ca.gov/01-consumers/180-climate-change/Sustainable-Insurance-Strategy.cfm>
- California's Safer from Wildfires Program <https://www.insurance.ca.gov/01-consumers/200-wrr/Safer-from-Wildfires.cfm>
- Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS) Wildfire Prepared Home Guidelines <https://wildfireprepared.org/wp-content/uploads/WPH-How-To-Prepare-My-Home-Checklist.pdf>

Summary Comparison of Insurance Guidelines

	California Safer from Wildfires	IBHS Wildfire Prepared Home (Basic)
Zone Zero (0-5')	Noncombustible	<u>Noncombustible, including tree limbs extending into Zone Zero</u>
Zone One (5-30')	Horizontal plant spacing	<u>Horizontal and vertical plant spacing</u>
Fences & Gates	Noncombustible in Zone Zero	<u>Noncombustible 5' from house or eave</u>
Decks	Clear underneath	<u>Clear underneath, posts/lattice bottoms 6" noncombustible, screen/enclose if < 4'</u>
Sheds	<u>At least 30' away from home</u>	At least 10' away from home with defensible space if > 15 SF
Vents	Metal 1/8" mesh	Metal 1/8" mesh <u>and dryer vent flap</u>
Gutters	N/A	<u>Metal and cleared of debris</u>
Eaves	<u>Enclosed or soffit</u>	N/A
Roof	Class-A fire rated	Class-A fire rated
Siding	Noncombustible 6" at base	Noncombustible 6" at base
Windows & Doors	<u>Multi-paned or shutters</u>	N/A

Note: Underlining indicates the stronger guideline.

This summary is for comparison purposes only and is not intended as guidance.

Pursuing “Community-wide” Protection Against Wildfires

Layer 1: Individual Structure Resilience (the physics layer)

Layer 2: Neighborhood Coordination (the herd layer)

Where wildfire resilience turns into wildfire immunity, beginning with three small “experiments”:

- 1) The Five-Foot Pact (30 days)
Every household commits to the same baseline around the structure. Not perfection—just the highest-leverage zone done by everyone.
- 2) The Ember Walk (one day)
A small group walks the block with a checklist: vents, gutters, fences, under-deck storage, etc. to identify ignition amplifiers.
- 3) The Group Retrofit Order (one contractor, one spec)
Pick one item (vents, gutter protection, fence breaks, deck detailing) and do it in bulk to leverage economies of scale.

Layer 3: Policy and Pricing (the scale layer)

Source: “Does herd immunity work for wildfire?” by Nate Wittasek, Fire Protection Engineer
<https://nathanbwittasek.substack.com/p/does-herd-immunity-work-for-wildfire>

Recommendations

- ❑ Read, understand and comply with OVA's Firewise Landscape Policy
- ❑ Monitor Santa Rosa's WUIFA regulations for potential strengthening
- ❑ If in a Very High FHSZ, monitor progress of CAL FIRE's Zone Zero Regulation Advisory Committee
- ❑ Prepare for more demanding requirements and higher homeowner's insurance premiums

All subject to change!

Comments?

Questions?

Visit <https://oakmontvillage.com/firewise>
to learn more about preparing for wildfires