



Photos courtesy of Boulder Wildfire Partners, part of an open source home hardening and defensible space [photo and video library](#), supported by a Fire Adapted Colorado Opportunity Award

Strategies for Resilience: Make the Most of National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day While Practicing Social Distancing

COMMUNITY PROJECTS THAT FOLLOW BEST PHYSICAL DISTANCING PRACTICES

● Dispersed Good Deeds

Plan outdoor projects for a neighbor or family member who may not be able to do them on their own. Many projects can be done while maintaining a safe distance. Keep simple simple, like raking, cleaning gutters, pruning around an address sign, mowing fine fuels (grass and weeds), or moving firewood off a porch. This will limit the interaction needed with the resident while still making the project a success. Don't gather the whole neighborhood to help. Instead, have volunteers adopt different neighbors, or assign tasks and schedule them so they don't overlap.

● Virtual Coffee Meet-up or Happy Hour

Set-up a virtual meeting platform, like Zoom or GoToMeetings, and schedule one or two special guests who can present expert perspectives on wildfire-related topics. Invite neighbors, friends or the whole community. Create a relaxed atmosphere by making some time for virtual introductions and by having your beverage of choice in hand. Some ideas to get you started:

- A nursery owner or landscape architect may talk about fire-resistant landscaping.
- A wildland firefighter or manager might address the seasonal outlook and local plans or capabilities.
- An insurance agent or representative can provide industry updates and give direction around completing a home inventory.
- Mitigation contractors can showcase their equipment capabilities, specialties and projects.
- A noxious weeds specialist or extension agent can give insights on combating weeds, especially those that contribute significantly to fire danger.
- Residents can share their own wildfire risk reduction projects or stories.

(As you consider who to invite, keep in mind that local fire and rescue and emergency management staff are dealing with the management of COVID-19. This is probably not the best time to ask them for a presentation.)

“While we are all doing what can to flatten the coronavirus impact curve to help protect our healthcare response capabilities, let's find ways to keep up community interest in wildfire risk reduction. Take advantage of extra time at home to add wildfire mitigation and household evacuation readiness to spring cleaning tasks.”

● Fire-Resistant Landscaping Contest or Challenge

Encourage residents to add fire-resistant features to their landscaping, cut back last year's dead growth, or even put their creativity to work on a fire-resistant landscaping project. Have them post pictures in a designated place. Consider making a contest out of it.

● Community Chipping Day

You can still plan neighborhood chipping days or other slash disposal sites. Just make sure to schedule and arrange payment to minimize or eliminate person-to-person contact. For instance, residents can load slash along the curb (check out Wildfire Adapted Partnership's [chipper pointers](#)) and a hired contractor or community chipping program can be scheduled to come and chip and haul the slash. Payment can be made through a homeowner association or you can use an online payment system like Venmo to share the expense. Or, one household in a neighborhood could take responsibility for arranging and organizing the chipping service while others share the cost or labor.

● Mow In

Encourage the whole neighborhood to mow their grass and other fine fuels. Have residents take before and after pictures and videos, and share them in a designated spot. Make sure people mow around their home, garage and other outbuildings, and along their driveways and road frontage. Invite the road department (or homeowner association maintenance) to come out in advance and do what they can do along roadsides. Encourage sharing and participation using all appropriate fine fuel reducing means in the neighborhood. For some this may include laying stone around foundations to keep the weeds from coming up. For others, this may include early season prescribed burning or letting the goats or other livestock do the mowing. What tools will you use?

INDIVIDUAL/HOUSEHOLD PROJECTS

What can someone do in a single day to help them stay safer from wildfire?

- Check and clear around address and street signs.
- Locate two alternate routes out of your neighborhood and drive them with the family.
- Move wood piles at least 30 feet from your home or other buildings. (This includes project wood under the porch and any stored propane or gas cans near the home.)
- Fully enclose the space under decks and patio, or use 1/8" mesh to screen it in.
- Rake and remove pine needles and leaves from at least 3 to 5 feet around your home and other buildings. Cut the grass and weeds in same area.
- Sweep pine needles and leaves from porches and rake from under decks, play structures, etc.
- Clear any needles and leaves out of gutters.
- Remove lower limbs from any trees near your home. You want to keep a fire on the forest floor. Removing lower limbs will take away the "ladder" from the surface to the crown of the tree.
- Create a family communication plan.
- Update your [evacuation kit](#) or go bag.
- Sign up for local emergency notifications. Find out the local emergency alert information and share it with your family, friends and neighbors.
- Set up a neighborhood text tree that lets you [send an email via text](#). This allows for rapid and detailed sharing of emergency information in your neighborhood.

SHARE YOUR WORK!

The National Fire Protection Association's annual **Wildfire Community Preparedness Day** takes place May 2, 2020. Learn more at [WildfirePrepDay.org](#).

We hope you find the resources helpful and worth sharing. If you make use of them in your community, please let us know!

Post your photos and videos on Facebook and Twitter (#WildfirePrepDay). Mention the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (@fireadaptednet) and NFPA Firewise USA® (@Firewise) as well as your own programs.

Post projects online on NFPA's Wildfire Community Preparedness Day [map](#) to share with the entire country.



This handout has been adapted from the [NFPA toolkit](#) and the Fire Adapted Colorado newsletter.

For more about FACO, find them on Facebook at [@Fireadaptedco](#) or subscribe to the FACO blog (<https://fireadaptedco.org/blog/>).

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