

2009 FireWise Information

From: **Barth, Christopher M.** (CBarth@springsgov.com)

Sent: Fri 1/09/09 4:32 PM

To:

Dear FireWise Champions,

I begin each new year by looking back at the previous year – measuring successes and identifying areas for improvement. As I look back on 2008, I am impressed by all of the FireWise accomplishments due to the participation of Champions like you and the neighbors in your community.

In 2008:

- there were **38 neighborhood chipping events** in 2008
- **1115 homeowners** participated in neighborhood chipping
- more than **185 tons** (365 cubic yards) of combustible vegetation was removed from homeowner's property
- there were **51 FireWise presentations** in 2008
- there were **729 on-site consultations or reassessments** in 2008
- FireWise staff met with more than **2800 people** during the course of the year

These numbers represent some of the highest participation levels in the program's history.

Although it is only January, we are gearing up for another busy year of FireWise activities and wildfire mitigation. In looking forward to the remainder of 2009, I am sure that we will continue surpass participation levels based on all of your enthusiasm (*and an expression of healthy competition*) during last year's Champions recognition event.

2009 City Budget

As many of you are aware, the City of Colorado Springs is facing the same economic issues that the rest of the community is dealing with currently. At this time, it is unclear what the specific impacts to city services will be. We are committed, however, to offering FireWise presentations and on-site consultations throughout the year, as well as the already scheduled neighborhood chipping events (see below).

We are continuing to monitor the situation and waiting for the latest direction on the 2009 budget. Depending on the outcomes, we may be able to scale up activity or be forced to scale program features down. However, we are continually exploring ways to offer a consistent level of services with fewer resources.

Champions University

Somewhat related to exploring new alternatives, I would like to extend an offer for you to participate in a "Champions University" this spring. Having the pleasure to work with all of you, I have come to realize that each neighborhood operates in a unique way – at least as it relates to FireWise activities. I think it would be insightful to the Champions and beneficial to the FireWise program to get a group of you together to talk about how the program works in your neighborhoods. I think that you all will be able to learn a lot from one another, and I am sure that there will be some suggestions for making the FireWise program features work more smoothly.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me via email (cbarth@springsgov.com) or phone (385-7281). I am also interested in a group that would like to act as the Advisory Committee for organizing this event. If you have an interested in planning the event please mention that specifically in your email or voicemail.

FireWise Presentations

It is never too early to schedule FireWise presentations for your community. In addition to a dedicated FireWise meeting with a revised presentation, we would be happy to offer a brief update during one of your regularly scheduled meetings. Presentations can take place at the meeting location of your choice, in a neighbor’s living room, at a Fire Station in your area, or at the Fire Department Headquarters. This year, dependent on emergency calls, firefighters from your neighborhood station will be invited to attend at your request. FireWise presentations are a great way to get informed about wildfire mitigation, wildfire evacuation, our chipping program (as well as getting them qualified for the chipping program), and the latest information about fuels reduction activity in your area.

On-Site Consultations

Despite the cold and snow, on-site consultations are conducted throughout the year. Often, the winter, when vegetation is dormant, is a good time to have an on-site consultation and plan your wildfire mitigation activities as it can be easier to get into the trees to do the work. On-site consultations can be scheduled Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am and 3:30 pm.

While the FireWise presentation is a valuable way to learn about the broad features of the FireWise program, the on-site consultation is the best way to determine what specific actions you can take on **your** property to reduce your risk from wildfire.

Neighborhood Chipping

Last year, I informed everyone that in order to participate in the neighborhood chipping program individual would need to either attend a FireWise presentation or schedule an on-site consultation prior to the chipping event. Additionally, we ask that each of you supply us with a list of those participating in the chipping at least one week prior to the beginning of chipping in your neighborhood. I am impressed and grateful for your diligence in making that happen during 2008. However, there are still a few neighborhoods that will need to schedule a neighborhood meeting, a few homeowners who need to arrange for an on-site consultations and a few neighborhoods that will need to let homeowners know that they need to sign-up at least one week prior in order to participate in the chipping program. Please let me know if there is anything I can do the help facilitate these requests.

As many of you are aware, most of the dates available for the 2009 neighborhood chipping program have been booked. We are also busy scheduling neighborhood FireWise meetings into the next several months. As you begin to plan your neighborhood events for 2009, I ask that you think about booking a meeting – whether it is a dedicated FireWise meeting or a part of your annual meeting – as well as scheduling on-site consultations soon.

Week of:	Neighborhood	Notes
4/27/2009	Raven Hills	All items must be curbside by Sunday April 26 th to be eligible for pickup.

5/4/2009	Panorama	
5/11/2009	Pleasant Valley	
5/18/2009	Greencrest	
5/25/2009	Skyway	Will begin on 5/26
5/25/2009	Stratton	Will begin on 5/26
6/1/2009	Hunters Point	
6/8/2009	Cedar Heights	
6/15/2009	Erindale Heights	
6/22/2009	Kissing Camels Park	
6/29/2009	Erindale Park	
6/29/2009	Woodmen Oaks	
7/6/2009	Skyway Heights	
7/13/2009	Pinecliff	
9/14/2009	Broadmoor Bluffs	
9/21/2009	Discovery	
9/21/2008	Mesa	
9/28/2009	TOSHA	
10/5/2009	Comstock	
10/12/2008	Country Broadmoor	

10/12/2009	Mountain Shadows	
10/19/2009	Valley at Erindale	
10/26/2009	Oak Valley	

Newsletter Articles

Many of you stay connected with the homeowners in your community through a print or electronic newsletter. If you would like an article related to wildfire risk, wildfire mitigation, or any related topic, please let me know. With some advanced notice, I would be happy to prepare something for you to distribute within your community.

Other News

Some other activities that you may notice during 2009 are some revisions to the FireWise website (<http://csfd.springsgov.com>) and a reassessment (updated rating data) of each property in the wildland urban interface.

As always, I appreciate your ongoing commitment and dedication to ***Sharing the Responsibility*** of living in the wildland urban interface and reducing your wildfire risk!

Chris

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"Sharing the Responsibility"

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