



Fire Safe Council of Nevada County
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March 19, 2020

Dear Fire Safe Family,

During challenging times, the only way through is for communities to team up and work together. We are very fortunate in Nevada County to live in a very compassionate and resilient community. It's our mission at Fire Safe Council of Nevada County to offer programs that best prepare our community for wildfire safety. In keeping with that spirit, the safety of our employees, volunteers and community is of the utmost importance to us during these unprecedented times. I want to share with you some of the steps we are taking to provide the safest practices amongst staff, volunteers and all of our programs.

Effective March 20th, 2020 our business office will be temporarily closed for 2 weeks in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. We will reassess at the end of this time period, based on the best information available at that time. **Our staff will still be available to answer phone calls, emails, process requests and any program questions remotely from their homes.**

The Defensible Space Advisory Visit program will be placed on hold for the next few weeks, in order to protect our residents and volunteers from possible exposure to COVID-19. We encourage everyone to follow the CDC and public health recommendations for social distancing and self-isolation currently. This program is dependent on the participation and health of our volunteers. Under no circumstance do we want to jeopardize the health of the volunteers that run this crucial educational program. Soon enough it will be fire season again and we will need our educators in full force, protecting the residents in our community. I know even a few weeks seems like time we cannot afford to lose in wildfire preparedness education; however, we feel this step is necessary to secure the future of the program long term.

The community chipping program will also be paused for the time being. As many of you know, we can offer this donation only program due to the participation of the inmate labor crews. As of now, the inmate labor program has been suspended until further notice. We are working diligently to find an acceptable alternative labor force to reinstate the program. We realize that many of you rely on this program to implement your defensible space clearing projects and we do not want to diminish your efforts.

We continue to plan for the 2020 Community Wildfire Preparedness Day and our 2020 Green Waste event. We are hopeful that these events will not be impacted since they are scheduled in May and June.

We are also working on ways to help ensure our Firewise Communities can continue collaborating amongst themselves. If you need help coordinating online meetings, please reach out so we can assist facilitating these for you.

We would like to convey that while these are uncertain times and new recommendations are being provided daily regarding COVID-19, we by no means want our community to halt the marvelous momentum that our residents have shown participating in wildfire preparedness and vegetation management activities. I would encourage you to take advantage of your time at home over the next few weeks. It is a good time to be looking at the defensible space around your home, planning wildfire preparedness activities, reviewing your evacuation plans and reaching out to your neighbors via phone or text. This is a prime opportunity to get to know your neighbors and community members needs while we navigate these difficult times. You may just learn a few new tricks to help your community members now and during wildfire season.

Please stay safe and know that we will get through this together.

The Only Way Is Through.

Jamie Jones
Executive Director
Fire Safe Council of Nevada County