

CARMEL VIEWS

Community Wildfire Action Plan 2024-2027



FIREWISE USA
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Firewise USA is a voluntary program that teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action. Carmel Views has been a nationally recognized Firewise Community since 2021. This recognition reflects our collective efforts to reduce the risks of wildfire to our homes, properties, and the HOA common areas.

Firewise recognition makes Carmel Views safer. It also makes members of our community eligible for discounted homeowner's insurance rates from many companies, and, importantly, provides a powerful signal to local fire authorities that our community is doing all it can to reduce wildfire risks and will be more defensible during wildfire events.

Maintaining Carmel Views' Firewise Recognition **requires:**

- **ANNUALLY:** Submitting a renewal application each November that includes a report summarizing what the community has accomplished in the preceding year.
- **EVERY 3 YEARS:** Developing a new 3-year community Action Plan based on an updated assessment of the current level of our community's wildfire risks.

GREAT NEWS!! Carmel Views' Firewise Recognition has just been renewed for the 2025 calendar year!

Because 2024 was the 3-year anniversary of our Firewise recognition, this year's renewal application included not only the annual summary of community accomplishments, but also an updated Risk Assessment and a new 3-year Action Plan.

A big THANK YOU to the many Carmel Views homeowners who took the time to submit an annual summary of their household investments in wildfire risk reduction and/or completed the Risk Assessment survey sent out with the annual dues package last year. The information that you provided was critical to ensuring our renewal application succeeded.

The document that follows is our **NEW 3-year Action Plan**. It was developed by community volunteers and in consultation with the Board of the Carmel Views Community Association. The formatting follows a required template supplied by the State of California. Please contact Liz Chornesky, the Carmel Views Firewise Lead, with any questions at CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com.

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Please enter a brief description of your community and delete the example below

The community of Carmel Views, a neighborhood of 173 homes, is located east of Highway 1 and the town of Carmel-by-the-Sea. It consists of landscaped private parcels punctuated by common areas (about a third of the community's acreage) owned by the community's HOA that contain a mix of Monterey pine & oak woodland forest and grassland. Carmel Views has been a recognized Firewise community since 2021. In our initial 3-year period, the community has made significant strides in spurring homeowners to reduce wildfire risks by hardening their homes, reducing fuel loads, and adopting landscaping practices recommended by CalFire. Respondents to our 2024 Risk Assessment Survey reported that almost all (99%) had taken steps to create defensible space over the past 3 years, with many (79%) participating in Chipper Days and our community Genista Eradication Campaign (50%). An increasing proportion of homeowners also report investing in home hardening over the previous 3 year period (55% in 2024 versus 35% in 2021). Survey results suggest additional gains could be made in homeowner treatments in the 30-100' zone and adjacent to neighboring properties and roads. During the past 3 years, our HOA took the significant step of establishing 30-foot fuel breaks along boundaries between the common areas and private lots to protect homes. Our HOA also adopted more aggressive fuel treatments along roads in the community. This new Action Plan builds on these successes by (1) continuing and enriching our extensive and effective communications campaign that uses emails, a website, community banners, annual meetings, and one-on-one communications to reach homeowners; (2) focused efforts to reach new homeowners and the relatively small number of homeowners who have not yet taken action because they are disadvantaged or disengaged; (3) continuing our HOA's extensive fuel break maintenance and other fuel management activities in the common areas; (4) expanding the HOA efforts to improve emergency evacuation routes through collaborative partnerships; and (5) intensifying our efforts to spur improved fuel management on less-managed areas adjacent to our community that are under the ownership of other public and private entities.

Year 1 – 2024-25

Education and Outreach Goals

- 1. Research, write, and distribute quarterly Firewise email newsletter to homeowners with information updates and links to online resources about home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, evacuation information & resources, state & local policies, homeowner's insurance, and upcoming events.**
- 2. Post banners to urge homeowner participation in the 4 annual Chipper Days sponsored by the Cypress Fire Protection District and in our community's annual Genista Eradication Campaign.**
- 3. Regularly update and improve information and links available through the Carmel Views website related to home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, and emergency preparedness.**
- 4. Host a presentation and discussion at the HOA's annual meeting on a timely topic to improve homeowner understanding of steps they can take to reduce wildfire risks to their homes, property, families, and community. Tentative topic for the February 2025 meeting is emergency evacuation routes and procedures.**
- 5. Develop and distribute a flyer to new homeowners explaining what it means to be a Firewise Community and encouraging their active participation.**

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6. Share new 3-year Action Plan by announcing it by email and posting it on the community website.

Home Hardening Goals

- 1. Distribute information to homeowners about newly available products and services for home hardening via the quarterly email newsletter.**
- 2. Post links to home-hardening guidance from the State of California and fact sheets from Firewise USA on the community website.**
- 3. Track homeowner investments in home hardening through an annual survey.**

Defensible Space / Fuel Reduction Goals

- 1. Maintain and improve fuel breaks between the the common areas and private lots.)**
- 2. Conduct semi-annual fuel treatments along all roads in the community.**
- 3. Raise funds for HOA work on common areas through grants and voluntary homeowner donations.**
- 4. Support an annual Spring “Genista Eradication Campaign” by distributing educational materials to homeowners and posting a banner at the community entrance. Depending on community demand and available funding, may include a dedicated pick-up day when contractors will remove roadside piles of Genista.**
- 5. Track homeowner investments in defensible space/fuel reduction through an annual survey.**

Evacuation Planning (Ex. Preparedness & Routing) and Wildfire Preparedness

- 1. Facilitate planned analysis by the Monterey County Resource Conservation District related to the feasibility and costs of restoring the evacuation route at the end of Outlook Drive.**
- 2. Distribute information to homeowners about emergency evacuation routes and procedures through the quarterly newsletter and website.**
- 3. Discuss community evacuation routes and procedures at the HOA’s Annual Meeting (February 2025).
Note: All community members are invited to attend the Annual Meeting, which is also available via ZOOM. Attendance is typically ~30-40% of homeowners.*

Year 2 - 2025-26

Education and Outreach Goals

- 1. Research, write, and distribute quarterly Firewise email newsletter to homeowners with information**

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updates and links to online resources about home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, evacuation information & resources, state & local policies, homeowner’s insurance, and upcoming events

2. Post banners to urge homeowner participation in Chipper Days sponsored by the Cypress Fire Protection District and our community’s annual Genista Eradication Campaign.
3. Regularly update and improve information and links available through the Carmel Views website related to home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, and emergency preparedness.
4. Host a session at the HOA’s annual meeting on a timely topic to improve homeowner understanding of steps they can take to reduce wildfire risks to their homes, property, families, and community. Tentative topic for the February 2026 meeting is “best practices” for home hardening, with a panel of Carmel Views homeowners who have undertaken home hardening steps.
5. Distribute new homeowner flyers as properties in the community change ownership.
6. Have community members self-assess and report their investments in fuel reduction and home hardening via an annual survey.

Home Hardening Goals

1. Distribute information to homeowners about newly available products and services for home hardening via the quarterly newsletters and website
2. Facilitate a panel of Carmel Views homeowners who have undertaken home hardening improvements at the HOA Annual Meeting. Summarize key findings from the panel discussion and distribute these through the quarterly email newsletter.
3. Contact homeowners who have not yet successfully initiated lower-cost home hardening or fuel reduction on their properties to encourage action.
4. Track homeowner investments in home hardening through an annual survey.

Defensible Space / Fuel Reduction Goals

1. Maintain and improve fuel breaks between the common areas and private lots.
2. Conduct semi-annual fuel treatments along all roads in the community
3. Raise funds for HOA work on common areas through grants and voluntary homeowner donations.
4. Support an annual Spring “Genista Eradication Campaign” by distributing educational materials to homeowners and posting a banner at the community entrance. Depending on community demand and available funding, may include a dedicated pick-up day when contractors will remove roadside piles of Genista.

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5. Explore the potential for developing a pool of funds to provide cost-share support to a select group of homeowners who cannot afford to undertake fuel reduction efforts on their properties.
5. Track homeowner investments in defensible space/fuel reduction through an annual survey

Evacuation Planning (Ex. Preparedness & Routing) and Wildfire Preparedness

1. Report results of the Resource Conservation District's analysis of the feasibility and costs of repairing the evacuation route at the end of Outlook Drive.
2. Based on results of the RCD analysis, start working with the County and CalFire to identify resources for fixing the Outlook Drive route, or to identify feasible alternatives.
2. Distribute information to homeowners about emergency evacuation routes and procedures through the quarterly newsletter and website
3. Work with Rancho Rio Vista HOA and/or the Cypress Fire Protection District to ensure that overhanging trees and excess fuels are removed from both sides of the primary evacuation route via Canada Drive.

Year 3 - 2026-27

Education and Outreach Goals

1. Research, write, and distribute quarterly Firewise email newsletter to homeowners with information updates and links to online resources about home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, evacuation information & resources, state & local policies, homeowner's insurance, and upcoming events
2. Post banners to urge homeowner participation in Chipper Days sponsored by the Cypress Fire Protection District and our community's annual Genista Eradication Campaign.
3. Regularly update and improve information and links available through the Carmel Views website related to home hardening, landscape/fuel treatments, and emergency preparedness.
4. Host a session at the HOA's annual meeting on a timely topic to improve homeowner understanding of steps they can take to reduce wildfire risks to their homes, property, families, and community. Tentative topic for the February 2027 meeting is "best practices" for landscape treatments, with a combined panel of

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Carmel Views homeowners and Cypress FPD experts.

5. Distribute new homeowner flyers as properties in the community change ownership
6. Have community members self-assess and report their investments in fuel reduction and home hardening via an annual survey.
7. Have community members complete a repeat of the Risk Assessment Survey and return it with their annual dues. Use results of this survey to update the community Risk Assessment and inform development of the updated community Action Plan.
8. Develop new Community Action Plan for 2028-31 in collaboration with the Carmel Views Fire Team and the HOA Board.

Home Hardening Goals

1. Distribute information to homeowners about newly available products and services for home hardening via the quarterly newsletters and website
2. Track homeowner investments in home hardening through an annual survey.
3. Assess homeowner awareness and investment in defensible space and fuel reduction through a repeat of the 3-year community Risk Assessment Survey.

Defensible Space / Fuel Reduction Goals

1. Maintain and improve fuel breaks between the common areas and private lots.
2. Conduct semi-annual fuel treatments along all roads in the community.
3. Support an annual Spring “Genista Eradication Campaign” by distributing educational materials to homeowners and posting a banner at the community entrance. Depending on community demand and available funding, may include a dedicated pick-up day when contractors will remove roadside piles of Genista.
3. Raise funds for HOA work on common areas through grants and voluntary homeowner donations
5. Track homeowner investments in defensible space/fuel reduction through an annual survey
5. Assess homeowner awareness and investment in defensible space and fuel reduction through a repeat of the 3-year community Risk Assessment Survey.

Evacuation Planning (Ex. Preparedness & Routing) and Wildfire Preparedness

1. Advance the most promising alternatives for secondary emergency evacuation routes through partnerships with CalFire and the County.

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- 2. Distribute up to date information to homeowners about emergency evacuation routes and procedures through the quarterly newsletter.**
- 3. Post updated & revised evacuation guidance information and links on the community website.**