

## Subject line: CVCA Fire Preparedness Update #10

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### **FIRE PREPAREDNESS UPDATE #10** *from the CVCA Firewise Team*

#### **1) Get Ready for May Fire Inspection**

This May, the Cypress Fire Protection District will begin implementing newly strengthened standards for residential fuel reduction and defensible space when they conduct fire safety inspections in Carmel Views. These standards reflect State-mandated requirements (California Resource Code 4291) and Cypress Fire Protection District requirements (Local Ordinance 2020-07).

The standards are designed to help prevent ignitions from blowing embers and the spread of fire across yards and between neighboring properties. Compliance with the standards also will make your home and property easier to defend for firefighters while, conversely, homes with poorly maintained vegetation may be viewed as a “lost cause” during wildfire emergencies.

For the area out to 100 feet from your home, you need to maintain:

- Grass no higher than 4 inches;
- Horizontal space between shrubs and trees;
- Vertical space between lower tree limbs and other vegetation;
- Removal of fallen leaves, needles, twigs/branches, bark. (Note, however, that ground cover can be maintained to a depth of 4 inches for erosion control.)

Importantly, Cypress FPD instructs homeowners they also must maintain a 30-foot reduced-fuel zone along their property lines next to public roads and next to neighboring residential lots.

For a full explanation of how you can meet the standards click [here for State requirements](#) and [here for local ones](#). The State Cal Fire website (access [here](#)) also has lots of handy resources for homeowners, including an interactive self-

assessment tool for evaluating your home's defensible space, a homeowner's checklist, and more!

The 2020 Local Ordinance allows the Cypress FPD to perform weed abatement on private lots when notified homeowners refuse to take appropriate action. The costs will be added to the property's annual property tax bill, with the same due dates and penalties as for property taxes.

## **2) Take Advantage of 2023's First Chipper Day – March 6**

Chipper Day is coming soon to help you prepare for May inspections and/or get rid of fallen branches and debris from recent storms.

For newcomers to Carmel Views, our local fire protection district (Cypress) sponsors the *free* removal of branches and brush from our curbsides four times a year free. But there are rules!

- Cut tree and bush limbs must be no more than 6 inches in diameter and stacked neatly with the butt end perpendicular to the road;
- Stacks must be no more than 4 feet high;
- NO metal objects (nails, etc.), NO Genista (broom), NO poison oak, and NO vines. Piles with these contaminants won't be removed.

Your materials must be out along the road **by 8AM on March 6**. Removal will occur sometime between March 6 and March 17. For details, click [here for more information on the Cypress FPD website](#).

## **3) Listen to Experts About Home Insurance**

Many of us in Carmel Views have had trouble at some point finding or maintaining homeowner's insurance. If you are in this camp, United Policyholders – a non-profit that provides insurance information for homeowners – sponsored an informative webinar in late 2022 that might help.

A recording of the webinar – “How to Survive the Property Insurance Crisis: A Shopping Webinar for CA Consumers” can be accessed by [clicking this YouTube link](#).

In the video, an expert panel discusses:

- What to do if your insurer non-renews you.
- Is it safe to insure your home through a company you’ve never heard of?
- What is the CA Fair Plan and what options does it offer?
- What fine print matters when buying home insurance?
- Questions to ask to get adequate protection in place for your home.

#### 4) Coming Soon – Genista Eradication Campaign!

*Genista* (AKA French broom) is highly flammable and increases our neighborhood’s fire risks. Left unchecked, this highly invasive weed forms dense brushy stands. Its yellow flowers may be lovely, but this is one bad actor that NEEDS TO GO!



Stay tuned for more information on how you can join a neighborhood-wide campaign to eliminate this pernicious weed from Carmel Views. In the works are plans for an information brochure, neighborhood advisors, and more. For those who are already removing *Genista*, remember that CVCA owns specialized pullers for grappling with larger plants and bushes. Just contact the Board if you would like to borrow them.

Interested in helping the Firewise Team pull off the *Genista* campaign? Contact Liz Chornesky at [CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com](mailto:CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com).

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*Please email Liz Chornesky, the current Carmel Views Firewise Lead ([CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com](mailto:CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com)), and copy your message to the Board ([cvcaboard@gmail.com](mailto:cvcaboard@gmail.com)), if you have any questions or comments about this or future **CVCA Fire Preparedness Updates**.*