

Subject line: CVCA Fire Preparedness Update #6

FIRE PREPAREDNESS UPDATE #6

from the CVCA Firewise Team

The recent balmy weather is a good reminder to reduce fire risks *before* fire season arrives. Let's each take the time now to make our homes and yards less vulnerable to flying embers and flames. Here are some steps that can help!

1) Learn Important Tips from Fire and Landscaping Experts

So far, our Firewise Program has organized two opportunities for residents to learn from leading local fire experts. These include an in-person demonstration event led by CalFire and the Fire Safe Council for Monterey County in November 2021 and a presentation about "firesafe" landscaping by local horticultural expert Alan Wheat at the January 2022 CVCA Annual Meeting.

Don't despair if you were unable to participate! Top tips from the demonstration event have been posted on the CVCA website (see the [demonstration event summary](#)). Did you know, for example, that large embers lofted from active fires can travel miles before they land and cause new ignitions? Or that some relatively inexpensive improvements are available that could significantly reduce your home's vulnerability to wildfires?

We currently are working with Alan Wheat to develop a summary of his advice about how to create a firesafe landscape and will send out a notice when that becomes available on the CVCA website.

2) Create an "Ember-Resistant Zone" Around your Home

What is an ember-resistant zone? It's a 5-foot area directly adjacent to your home (including under and around decks) that is clear of any materials

or objects that might be ignited by blowing embers – such as flammable plants, organic mulches, stacked firewood, storage boxes, waste containers, and wood fencing or gates.

Fire experts agree that creating an ember-resistant zone is one of **the most important** steps homeowners can take to reduce wildfire risks to their homes. California lawmakers have taken note, and under recent state law, new regulations related to the ember-resistant zone will be issued in 2023. Expect the requirements for existing homes to kick-in in 2024.

Meanwhile, you can get ahead of the curve by following this [useful guidance provided by CalFire](#) for creating your own ember-resistant zone today.

3) Reduce Your Fuel Load on Chipper and *Genista* Pick-up Days

We are extremely fortunate the Cypress Fire Protection District is once again sponsoring four Chipper Days for 2022. Mark your calendar, so that you can take advantage of this free brush and branch removal service.

Have material neatly stacked along the roadside according to the [Cypress rules](#) by the **first day** of each chipper period (since we won't know in advance the specific day the Cypress contractor will be coming to Carmel Views). Dates for 2022 are: **April 4-15; July 11-22; Sept. 12-23; Oct. 31-Nov. 11.**

As most Carmel Views residents know, *Genista* (AKA broom) – the highly flammable and invasive yellow-flowering shrub along our roadsides – is NOT eligible for pick-up by the Cypress Chipper Program. (See the [CVCA website](#) for helpful information about *Genista*, including an excellent identification video from our neighbor Maureen McEachen.) Happily, CVCA will be stepping in to fill this gap by sponsoring a pick-up day specifically for *Genista* during the **first week of May** (TBA).

Now is an excellent time to eradicate *Genista* from your yard while the yellow flowers make it easy to identify and the spring rain has made it easier to pull out by the roots. For larger or difficult to remove plants, you

can borrow a special *Genista*-puller tool from CVCA (email cvcaboard@gmail.com with your request).

4) Take Advantage of Reduced Homeowner's Insurance

Carmel Views' status as a Firewise recognized means that our community is working hard to reduce wildfire risks. It also means that Carmel Views residents may qualify for discounted homeowner's insurance rates!

The California Department of Insurance maintains a [list of companies](#) that provide Firewise discounts. Based on experience so far across Monterey County, the discount appears to vary among communities and homes, based on wildfire risk factors considered by each insurance company.

The Carmel Views Firewise Program would like to know if you have been able to secure a homeowners insurance discount because our community is Firewise-recognized and the percent reduction. This will help us keep track of how our Firewise participation is affecting residents. Please let us know what you discover by dropping an email to CarmelViewsFirewise@gmail.com.

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