



Oak Hill Area  
**FIRE SAFE  
COUNCIL**

# January 2022 Newsletter



**FIREWISE USA**  
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

*Dear Neighbors,*

**Welcome to a New Year!** Our wish is that the upcoming year be a safe and healthy one for each of our neighbors in the Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council. Volunteers with the OHAFSC are working hard to find ways to make our community more fire-safe! In this newsletter, you will learn about the Community Day Event on March 12 (rain-date is March 19), how you can request a Volunteer to come to your home to give you ideas on home-hardening and defensible space, how to improve your emergency access, and more.



**OHAFSC Community Day Event,  
March 12, 10 AM to 2 PM  
(rain date March 19)**

**Save the date!** We are launching our first ever, but hopefully annual, Community Day, our major event for the year- fun, educational, fundraiser-

**Location:** Oak Hill Fire Station back yard, Pleasant Valley Rd (a training facility now)

All at the event is free to residents of the Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council\*, though donations are welcome. Funds donated will help us improve Council offerings.

Kids games!

Activities and info!

Hot dog social



Music DJ!

All outdoors + well-spaced:

Masks welcome

### **Get rewarded for fire prevention**

Keep track of your hours and/or money spent since January 1, 2022 doing defensible space and/or home hardening. Add it to our banner at the event and you will be entered to win a **prize** - two awarded randomly, and two awarded to highest achievers! (For keeping track, your best estimate of hours and/or \$ spent for each month so far in 2022 is all we'll need)

Even spending one hour between now and the event on clearing fallen branches will make you eligible for the prize drawing. Get ready to add your name to our roll of "Ember Heroes"!



**Parking:** both in front of, and through the gate and behind, the fire station, but it may be tight. Please, no RVs. Volunteer parking attendants will be on hand.

**Volunteer** The more volunteers, the more successful the event. Let organizer Alice Cantelow know if you'd like to [help!](#) Thank you!!

### **Popups and Tables**

**Needed-** Have some to loan? Let us [know!](#)



\*All residents who live on, or on roads which feed into Pleasant Valley Rd between Big Cut and Cedar Ravine are part of the Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council. This includes all feeder roads like Zandonella, Oak Hill, Hanks Exchange, and all their "tributaries."



## Time for property maintenance!

Take advantage of warm winter days, with lowered fire risk, and fewer bird nests.



### ***“What do I do with all the slash?”***

**Make small, well-spaced piles**, far (>100 ft) from your house, where they can slowly decompose and provide wildlife habitat.

Have too much? Chip it!

### **Chipping Program up and running again!**

If you prepare your slash correctly, you can get it chipped for **FREE** thanks to a grant that the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council, our parent organization, received. (Thank you to the volunteers who obtained that for us all!) Be sure and read this information **BEFORE** you start creating your slash if you plan to use this [program](#). The funds are expected to last more than a year this time. Thanks to CalFire and the US Forest Service for the generous funding of this program.

### **Use your green waste voucher- before Feb 28!**

Don't get caught! El Dorado Disposal vouchers for one free pickup load of green waste dumping at the Material Recovery Facility expire on **Feb 28** this year, instead of March 30! You can also dispose of 5 bags/bundles of green waste throughout the year, next to your regular bi-weekly green can - contact [El Dorado Disposal](#) first though to reserve space





## Would You Like a Home Visit to Assess Your Defensible Space and Home Hardening?

We're now offering informal visits to your home for ideas on creating better fire resilience. We have volunteers who have studied up on both defensible space and home hardening who are ready and able to help. Contact us at [info@oakhillfiresafe.org](mailto:info@oakhillfiresafe.org) if you'd like to schedule two volunteers to come evaluate your home and property with you.

While good defensive preparation is **not a guarantee** of protecting homes, it can in some cases be the difference between saving a home and losing it to wildfire. If a home has good defensible space, firefighters can get in close to put out spot fires. And if the house itself has only a few vulnerabilities, firefighters can focus on those, such as cutting out ignited sections of decks, removing burning lattice, etc. (as they were able to do for some homes in the Caldor Fire as shown in our [October 2021 Newsletter](#))

*Roads and driveways matter too!*

If they are overgrown, firefighters can't get to your house safely, and your home will need to survive on its own.

**Remember: Our website has defensible space and home hardening information especially pertinent to our area**

# How Is Your Emergency Access ?

## Can You Get Out and Can Firefighters Get In ?



Roads are important in daily life and even more in an emergency!

Currently, the basic standard for our local roads is to have a 20 foot wide roadbed, 5 feet of clear space on either side of the road and 15 feet of vertical clearance. If a road meets this standard, then emergency equipment can get down the road. Two-way traffic is possible. It makes good sense!

### Choke Points

Roads that are less than the standard create choke points in an emergency, because they do not allow two-way traffic and may not be passable by emergency vehicles. The traffic snarl-up at these choke points creates delays and increases the dangers. The County is working to deal with some of these. The new bridge on Hanks Exchange eliminates a choke point. There are also plans to replace the one lane bridge along Oak Hill Rd. But there is no County plan to fix the choke point on Big Oak Rd at the EID ditch. And you may have choke points on your private road. As you drive your private road, look for choke points.

### Make access better

What can you do to make improvements to the roads you use daily and will need to use for emergencies? Clear back thick vegetation, shrubs, and small trees 5 feet from both sides of the road! Limb up and thin bigger trees! Make sure there is 15 feet of vertical clearance! Create a few well placed turnouts if you can't make the whole road wider. A neighborhood workday can accomplish a lot! If the roadbed is less than 20 feet but each side is clear of vegetation it is a much safer road in a wildfire emergency. Working with your neighbors to improve your road takes time, but will improve your community.

In some places the roads and the powerlines overlap, so PG&E has been doing some of the vegetation management for us. But as we have seen, the level of clearing varies considerably.

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## Lend a Hand- Its rewarding!

**Help out your community and meet some of your neighbors**

### **Join the Board at large:**

Time needed: Meetings every other month, virtually for now

Skill needed: Just an interest in sharing your ideas and concerns with this congenial group

We'd really like to have more complete representation of all the diverse areas within our fire safe council. People from the Hanks Exchange and Nashville Trail areas are especially needed, though we welcome anyone to become a board member!

Willing to guide goals and decisions with us, or know someone else who might? Please call or email our secretary Linda Azevedo at 707 498-9343 or [lindawazevedo@gmail.com](mailto:lindawazevedo@gmail.com)

### **Other ways to help:**

There are Many! From one day events, to ongoing outreach, etc. A few examples:

- \* The Community Day event (see article above), being organized by Alice. She is still looking for helpers, especially with the children's activities area, with parking, and with handing out free hot dogs and sodas.
- \* Lester represents our interests in applying for fire safety grant money and could use help.
- \* Loren assembles the address signs that are appreciated by first responders.
- \* Becky and Katie organize fire safety outreach information for new families in our area.
- \* The website could always use a new article about a neighborhood's good idea or fire resilience progress if you like to write.

In addition, you may have noticed a need that we haven't and can create your own way to make us all more fire safe! Contact Linda at she will see that you get connected to the right people. 707 498-9343 or [lindawazevedo@gmail.com](mailto:lindawazevedo@gmail.com)

Thanks for being a Fire Safe Council supporter and thanks for considering volunteering!

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## Annual Meeting Online, February 28, 7 PM

The OHAFCSC will hold our Annual Meeting virtually this year. We hope many will join us to hear about what is planned for the year and to give us your suggestions. We will also be voting for Board members and Officers. This is a great chance to get involved!

Officers to be voted on: Lester Lubetkin, Chair  
Linda Azavedo, Secretary  
Tom Daher, Treasurer

Other board members to be reaffirmed: Mark Leighton, Ingress/egress  
Alice Cantelow, Def. space/home hardening.  
Becky Leighton, New resident outreach  
Katie Meyer, New resident outreach  
Mark Pappas, member at large  
Carolyn Pappas, member at large

Let's all keep working together to make our community fire safe!

Watch for Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council **email notice with invitation and zoom link, abt February 25 .**



Sincerely,

*The Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council Team*

[info@oakhillfiresafe.org](mailto:info@oakhillfiresafe.org)

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## SIGN UP FOR **CodeRED** BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

The El Dorado County Sheriff uses the CODE RED service to notify you of an evacuation or other emergency but it doesn't work if you don't sign up! With CodeRED, you set up an account, select your communication preferences, such as cell phone, landline, text or email. Once set up, you receive emergency notifications as soon as they are sent.

To sign up for CODE RED, go to <https://ready.edso.org/>

