



Where We Live

Vol. 5, November 2008

Sharing the Responsibility

Colorado Springs, CO—The Colorado Springs Fire Department's FireWise program honored sixty-five area residents for their efforts to reduce the city's wildfire risk at the fifth annual FireWise Champions recognition event this past October.

The efforts of the individuals that were recognized contributed to 375 residential acres of wildfire mitigation that improved the

survivability of homes in those neighborhoods. More than 200 tons of vegetation was removed as a result of these projects.

In addition to the individual awards, the Patrick Niedringhaus Memorial Award was presented to Sandy Lewis of Cedar Heights. The Patrick Niedringhaus award, established in 2006 as a tribute to Patrick Niedringhaus, is given to the person that most embodies

Patrick's spirit, energy and enthusiasm for preserving our community and its natural beauty.



International Recognition for Wildland Risk



Denver, CO—This past August, Wildland Risk was recognized by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) at the annual Fire Rescue International conference in Denver. For almost 30 years, the IAFC Fire Service Award for Excellence has received nominations of programs that are

dedicated to improving fire departments' service to their communities.

Wildland Risk was acknowledged for its multifaceted approach to wildfire mitigation including working in stewardship with homeowner groups, coordinating mitigation projects through grant funds and in-kind support, collaborating with agency partners, working with volunteers, and providing a comprehensive

wildfire education program to residents of the wildland urban interface in the City of Colorado Springs.



Wildland Risk Receives Leadership Award



Tampa, FL—Wildland Risk was presented with the Firewise Leadership Award during the 2008 Backyards & Beyond conference in November. The Firewise Leadership Award program is designed to recognize organizations who demonstrate exemplary work in promoting

community-wide responsibility to reduce the loss of life and property to wildland fire independent of fire fighting efforts.

The Firewise Leadership Awards are sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Working Team, and a consortium of wildland fire agencies which includes the USDA Forest Service, the Federal Emergency

Management Agency, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the National Fire Protection Association.

Where We Live is printed by FireWise, a program of the City of Colorado Springs Fire Department Wildland Risk Unit. For more information, contact: Chris Barth, FireWise Program Coordinator (719) 385-7281, cbarth@springsgov.com



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2008 Wildland Risk Fuels Crew

Colorado Springs, CO—The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded a \$1 million mitigation grant to the Colorado Springs Fire Department to help the fire department's Wildland Risk section reduce wildfire risk in the city. One of the ways the fire department will accomplish this goliath task is by using a seasonal crew to complete some of the fuels reduction projects and provide neighborhood chipping services to homeowners in the wildland urban interface.

The crew is lead by Andrew Notbohm, Wildland Fuels Program Coordinator. Notbohm began with the fire department in 2008 after earning a reputation as a leader



Aaron Schanel



Barry Morris



John Brunk

in wildfire mitigation among private contractors. Crew members Barry Morris, Aaron Schanel, and John Brunk are the hard working individuals you saw in your neighborhoods, removing the dead, dying and diseased vegetation that contributes to elevated wildfire risk. The crew consistently receives accolades for their high degree of professionalism and "leaving the area nicer than when they began." All of the crew members bring various levels of experience in fuels mitigation projects and plan for a long career in the fire service.

Given the fact that the neighborhood chipping program helps homeowners remove nearly 200 tons of woody debris annually, each crew member lifted over 100,000 pounds during a six month period.

Annual FireWise Checklist

The area around your home needs periodic maintenance similar to your home's interior. Each year trees and shrubs continue to grow, plants die or are damaged, and plants drop their leaves and needles. Making your home safe from a wildfire can be as simple as an annual clean-up. Follow these tips to make your home FireWise:

- Remove dead, dying, or diseased trees and shrubs
- Trim low branches of evergreen trees
- Remove highly flammable plants adjacent to the home
- Remove debris accumulations from around your yard
- Remove branches that hang over the roof and chimney
- Mow grass and weeds to a low height
- Attach a hose that can reach to all parts of the house
- Post house numbers that are visible from all directions
- Discuss evacuation routes and meeting locations
- Replace wood roofs with a non-combustible roof
- Consider a fire resistant exterior siding; such as stucco
- Check that chimney screens are in good condition
- Call the FireWise office (385-7281) to request a FREE on-site consultation