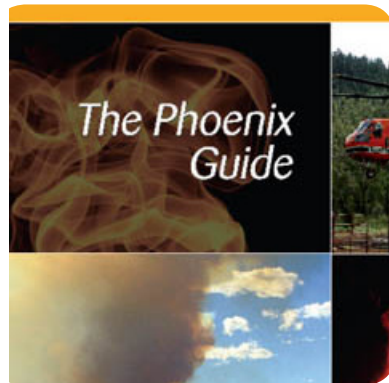




TOOLKIT



This toolkit contains materials that supplement NACD's Community Wildfire Desk Guide. The materials are intended to help local resource leaders and their partners take steps to mitigate risks before, during and after wildfire events. Links are provided to assistance, information and practical examples provided by government and nongovernment partners with similar goals.

Unless otherwise noted, these resources are provided as links to documents, web sites and other materials. They include:

- General resources, including hands-on tools for education, prevention and response to wildfire, and other materials that serve to frame discussion and understanding of wildfire risk and mitigation.
- Before-fire resources that focus on two key areas: Protecting communities at risk and reducing fuel loads in forests and rangelands.
- During-fire resources that outline roles for local resource leaders who seek to support activities of fire crews and serve community members.
- Post-fire resources that focus on the important roles local resource leaders play in restoring communities and ecosystems.
- Outreach and education resources that help with the important job of raising community awareness about wildfire dangers and mitigation strategies.
- Media materials that help maximize efforts to reach general audiences through effective communication in local, regional and state media.

General Resources

These resources provide both practical advice and background information on the hows and whys of community wildfire protection. Special attention is drawn to the "Montana Interagency Coordination Guide" and "The Phoenix Guide," two comprehensive resources that provide information on aspects of community wildfire protection before, during and after fires. Also provided in this section are materials that focus on fire prevention and education, both key roles for local resource leaders.

[Montana Interagency Coordination Guide: Working with Communities and Private Landowners Before, During and After Wildfires](#). Produced by the USDA Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and Bitter Root RC&D, the guide provides information on local, state and national agencies involved in wildland fire work, programs that support their efforts and other valuable information. While focused on Montana, the resource has broad value across fire-prone areas.

[The Phoenix Guide](#). A product of the Jefferson County Colorado Conservation District, USDA Forest Service and other partners, this guide is directed at local resource leaders and landowners who experience fire.

[Cost of Fire: An Analysis](#). This December 2006 NACD Forestry Notes Special Insert offers a detailed look at both the direct and indirect costs associated with catastrophic wildfire.

[Creating a community inter-agency disaster organization](#). The corporation for National and Community Service Resource Center offers this resource on its Web site. It provides a list of principles, goals and roles involved in the establishment of a community inter-agency disaster organization.

[Forest Health and Wildfires – A Net Cost Approach to a True Wildfire Protection Program](#). This Washington State Department of Natural Resource report offers figures related to the cost of wildfire suppression and explains the forest and fire relationship.

[The Changing Role and Needs of Local, Rural and Volunteer Fire Depts. in the WUI.](#) This 2003 National Association of State Foresters report offers a detailed look at fire department training and equipment needs, and the obstacles involved in fighting fire in the wildland-urban interface. The report also addresses coordination among fire departments' prospective partners.

[The True Cost of Wildfire in the Western U.S.](#) This 2009 Western Forestry Leadership Coalition report examines direct and indirect costs associated with several of the catastrophic wildfires that occurred in western states over the past decade. The document also includes a series of case studies and comparisons.

[Western State Processes for Implementing the National Fire Plan & 10yr Strategy.](#) This 2002 Western Forestry Leadership Coalition report takes a state-by-state look at how federal and local partners interact under the National Fire Plan. The report's question-and-answer approach makes it easy to follow, and each state entry offers agency contact information to help satisfy reader follow up questions.

Fire Prevention and Education

[The Fire Safe Council](#) provides resources for establishing and maintaining local Fire Safe Councils. Since its formation in April 1993, the Council has united diverse membership to speak with one voice about fire safety. The Council has distributed fire prevention education materials to industry leaders and their constituents, evaluated legislation pertaining to fire safety and empowered grassroots organizations to spearhead fire safety programs.

[Firewise Communities](#) is a multi-agency effort designed to reach out to homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, and others in the effort to protect people, property, and natural resources from the risk of wildland fire before a fire starts. The Firewise Communities approach emphasizes community responsibility for planning in the design of a safe community, as well as effective emergency response and individual responsibility for safer home construction, design, landscaping, and maintenance.

[Healthy Forests and Rangelands](#) is a portal to information about the National Fire Plan, Healthy Forests Initiative and related initiatives. Healthy Forests and Rangelands is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and their land management agencies.

[The National Interagency Fire Center Prevention and Education link](#) provides materials on a variety of topics that serve as handy references and guides to action for local resource professionals. Topics include: Communicator's Guide: Wildland Fire; Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Resources; Burning Issues, an interactive multimedia program that explores fires that occur on wildlands; Protecting Your Home from Wildland Fire; Education Materials on Line; and Public Service Announcements to promote understanding about wildland fire.

[Living With Fire in the Lake Tahoe Basin](#) provides homeowners with wildfire threat reduction recommendations developed by Nevada and Lake Tahoe's firefighting experts. The program also provides suggestions about what to do during and after a fire. While some of the information is specific to the Lake Tahoe region of Nevada and California, the site includes information and resources that can be used by local resource leaders in many regions of the country.

[Combustibility of Landscape Mulches](#) is a streaming video produced by the Nevada Tahoe Conservation District in Nevada, the Carson City Fire Department and Nevada Cooperative Extension. The video address questions about suitability of various landscaping mulches in fire-prone settings.

Before Fire

These resources address two general areas – protecting communities at risk and reducing fuel loads in forests and rangelands. Special attention is focused in the communities at risk section on materials that help develop community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs). These plans are essential components of community efforts to minimize the impacts of wildfire on people, property and other community resources. They are also required in order for communities to qualify for grants and program funds to help reduce wildfire risk. Fuels reduction materials are provided as examples for communities and organizations that seek to address fire risks by employing strategies such as mechanical treatments, prescribed fire and other strategies that promote healthy forests and rangelands. More examples are also provided in the case studies appendix of the desk guide.

Communities at Risk

[Community Guide to Preparing and Implementing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#). This 2008 publication of the International Association of Fire Chiefs is intended to assist CWPP participants by providing innovative strategies, case studies and additional resources to develop, implement and monitor their CWPPs

[Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan: A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities](#). This 2004 publication is a joint effort of the Communities Committee, National Association of Counties, National Association of State Foresters and Western Governors Association. The publication came out in response to enactment of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) in 2003 and provides clear direction on how communities can build their CWPPs and qualify for funding under HFRA. It is intended to provide communities with a concise, step-by-step guide to use in developing a CWPP.

[Handbook for Developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans](#). The handbook is published by the USDA Forest Service, Navajo County, Arizona, and White Mountain Natural Resources Working Group. In addition to providing information on CWPP development, the handbook underscores the value of “public working groups” that encourage open debate and common understanding in forest communities.

[Montezuma County, Colorado, Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#). The plan is offered as an example of a local CWPP. It provides information on how the plan was developed, who collaborated and action steps that were developed.

[National Association of State Foresters Field Guidance for Identifying and Prioritizing Communities at Risk](#). This document provides national uniform guidance for identifying and prioritizing communities at risk while allowing for flexibility at the state and regional level.

Fuels Reduction

[Reducing the Threat of Wildland Fire: Hazardous Fuels Reduction Success Stories Around the Nation](#). The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, offers a collection of success stories from around the country, underscoring the fact that many regions of the U.S. need to reduce fuel loads and reduce fire risks.

[Stewardship Contracting, NACD Forestry Notes Special Report](#). This 2004 NACD Special Report shows how conservation districts and their partners are achieving fuels reduction and forest health through the use of stewardship contracting authorities. Stewardship contracting allows communities to contract with private organizations or businesses to do the necessary thinning and remove small trees and undergrowth. As partial payment, stewardship contractors are able to keep part of what they remove. Receipts from the work are returned to local communities.

[NACD Woody Biomass Desk Guide and Toolkit](#) is intended to equip natural resource professionals and outreach specialists with the information and tools needed to increase awareness of the use of woody biomass for energy in the U.S. Communities today are challenged to develop effective strategies that support forest ecosystem health, mitigate the effects of climate change, satisfy growing energy needs, and provide local economic opportunities. For some communities, woody biomass may be a viable option for meeting these needs and deserves serious consideration. Forests in the U.S. represent an important potential energy and biobased product resource. The guide provides an overview of woody biomass production and utilization in the U.S., tips on how to provide effective outreach for your clientele, and educational handouts to share with your audiences.

During Fire

The “Montana Interagency Coordination Guide” and “The Phoenix Guide” are offered in this section (in addition to the general resources section) because they provide valuable information about the roles of local resource leaders as wildfires are occurring.

[Montana Interagency Coordination Guide: Working with Communities and Private Landowners Before, During and After Wildfires](#). Produced by the USDA Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and Bitter Root RC&D, the guide provides information on local, state and national agencies involved in wildland fire work, programs that support their efforts and other valuable information.

[The Phoenix Guide](#). A product of the Jefferson County Colorado Conservation District, USDA Forest Service and other partners, this guide is directed at local resource leaders and landowners who experience fire.

Post-Fire

The emphasis in this section is on roles local resource leaders assume in helping to restore communities and key natural resources once the fire is out.

Restoration

[A Landowner’s Post-Fire Decision Making Guide](#). Published by the Butte County Resource Conservation District in California, this brochure includes a list of do’s and don’ts

for landowners. It serves as a model that can be easily replicated by local resource professionals in other communities.

[After the Fire: A Landowner's Guide to Programs and Services For Assistance in Montana](#). A publication of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Forestry Division, this guide directs landowners to programs and services for assistance. It includes information on programs that support restoration and rehabilitation treatments for landscapes. While directed at Montana residents, the guide offers valuable information for people across the country.

[What We Leave on the Land](#). A 2003 NACD Special Report on the economic and environmental impacts of wildfire using the Colorado Hayman Fire as a case study .

[Out Front on the Front Range](#). A 2005 NACD Special Report revisits the Hayman Fire to feature the work of conservation districts and their partners in rehabilitation efforts.

[The Experience of Community Residents in a Fire-Prone Ecosystem: A Case Study on the San Bernardino National Forest](#). The 2008 report analyzes personal stress consequences of experiencing wildfires and living in communities threatened by wildfires. It also addresses perceived level of responsibility for wildfire prevention, participation in fire management activities and perceived barriers to effective fire management, and views about preferred ways of receiving communication and education about wildfires and management.

Outreach/Education

These materials are intended to help accomplish the important jobs of outreach and education to community groups. Some of the materials can be replicated for use in other communities.

Outreach and education are crucial to building awareness about forest health, fuels reduction, defensible space and related topics. The work is ongoing and never done. Many local resource organizations have newsletters, Web sites and other tools for communication. They host tours, open houses, educational days and a variety of other activities to reach adults and children with important messages. Effective outreach efforts will employ several strategies and regularly monitor their impact.

General

[Wildland Fire Communicators Guide](#). The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) and National Wildfire Coordinating Group make this interactive guide available to assist people who have communications responsibilities in wildfire-prone areas. It provides background information, ideas, sample materials, and sources for further information. Each section is written to stand on its own, ready to be extracted and used as a hand-out. It includes educational materials for adult and student audiences, information on working with media and an array of supporting resources.

Outreach Tools Used by Peer Organizations

Brochures

Brochures have the advantage of flexibility. They can be placed in strategic locations, mailed, handed out at public meetings and events, inserted into other materials and

made available in bulk on request. Two examples are provided here:

[Firewise Landscaping](#) is a quarter-fold brochure produced by the Three Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Council in Idaho and other partners. It can be easily replicated based on the landscaping recommendations for other regions.

[Forest Improvement Tour](#), Trinity County, California, encourages people to tour forest improvement projects conducted by the Trinity Resource Conservation District. It provides educational information for each tour stop.

Posters

Posters placed at public places where people gather can be effective ways to communicate your message. Here we provide a [link](#) to a variety of free posters provided by the U.S. Fire Administration. Posters are free and can be customized for your use. Follow instructions for ordering at the Web site. Orders can also be placed by telephone at (800) 561-3356.

Special Publications

Special publications that you print and distribute can be effective ways to reach broad audiences. Included as an example here is [Living With Fire: A Guide for the Homeowner](#), a 12-page publication produced by the [Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordinating Group](#).

Web

Web presence is essential in today's communications world. Web pages offer flexibility, immediacy and cost-effectiveness. Examples of Web sites/pages that educate about wildfire and fuels reduction are many. Here are a few:

[The Cascadia Conservation District](#) in Chelan County, Washington, features web sections on wildfire preparedness. It highlights district activities, educational materials, links and other information for county-wide fire protection.

[The Yosemite/Sequoia RC&D](#) in California features information on fire hazard reduction and biomass utilization.

[Living with Fire in the Lake Tahoe Region](#) includes information for residents on what to do before, during and after fires, along with information on resources and programs, and a calendar of events.

Media

Included here are materials and information about effective communication with media before, during and after fires.

News Releases

News releases issued to local and regional media are effective ways to get the message out to broad audiences. Make sure they include basic information outlined in the sample news releases provided here.

Some general tips:

- Learn which media cover your communities and regions
- Establish personal relationships with editors, news directors and reporters
- Learn how and when news media outlets want to receive information
- Provide local voices and local examples for your stories
- Include tip sheets with valuable background information
- Be sure to provide contact information
- Think “visual” for media that work with images. Is there an effective photo opportunity or illustration for your story?
- If media makes an error, politely inform them and, as necessary, ask for a correction
- Remember to say “thank you” for a job well done

Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements or PSAs are defined by the Federal Communications Commission as unpaid announcements that promote the programs of government or voluntary agencies or that serve the public interest. PSAs can be produced for television and radio broadcast. A few tips:

- Find out which broadcast media run PSAs and how they want to receive them
- Keep PSAs short, usually no longer than 30 seconds
- Choose your words carefully: A general broadcast rule of thumb is 180 words per minute; a 30-second PSA would have about 90 words; a 15-second PSA 45 words
- Some broadcasters will use their staff to read the PSAs; some will ask you to provide a voice. If asked to provide a voice, a good strategy is to choose a local leader who is known and respected in the community

PSA Examples:

Examples from the [Nevada Fire Safe Council](#) provide lists of PSAs focusing on wildfire risk and defensible space. They are easily adapted to other communities and regions.

News Release Examples

[NACD sample news releases](#). NACD provides three fill-in-the-blank news releases. The releases include “Sample NACD News Release on fire assistance from conservation districts and local resource organizations,” “Sample NACD release on costs of wildfire and district services,” and “Sample NACD release on wildfire.” These handy releases provide basic information that can be modified slightly and used in a variety of settings. Fill in the blanks to localize.

[Fire Safe Council of San Diego County](#), California, news releases shown at this link are examples of the many opportunities for reaching out to broad audiences with media releases. Fire Safe Council activities are administered by the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County. Note the variety of news releases and how they recognize the efforts of volunteers and partner organizations.