

Title of Entry: Wildfire Ready Neighbors (Motivating Incentives, Monetary and/or Nonmonetary)

[Wildfire Ready Neighbors](#) (*Listos Para Los Incendios*) is a social marketing program developed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR) that supports the efforts of community partners and existing fire, emergency and conservation programs to engage with individual residents to help make homes, structures and wildfire-prone landscapes more resilient to wildfire. Launched in nine counties since 2021, WRN first touched down in Eastern Washington’s highest risk counties before jumping over the mountains to Western Washington, paving the way for statewide partnerships, projects and events.

The goal of the program is simple: get neighbors prepared for wildfire. By providing free action plans with tailored steps based on participants’ unique property characteristics and sorted by priority and cost, WRN provides a clear pathway to wildfire readiness for everyone who signs up regardless of experience, ability, income or background. In just three years, the program has helped more than 5,000 Washingtonians to pledge and then adopt wildfire preparedness behaviors.

Identify and remove barriers to behavior change:

Leveraging qualitative research, literature reviews, and subject matter expert interviews, we found that many property owners were aware of wildfire risk but didn’t know where to start to prepare. Trust, time and cost and doubt about impact were also identified as barriers for residents to take action.

Develop and provide tangible services (incentives) to help audiences perform the behavior:

Everyone who signs up for WRN and commits to take action on their property, receives a Wildfire Ready Plan at no cost. Residents in active program counties can also request additional in-person Wildfire Ready Home Visits and forest health evaluations from local experts at the fire department, conservation district and WA DNR.

Convenient access to incentives:

Anyone renting or living in the state of Washington can sign up to receive a free Wildfire Ready Plan online, in person or by phone. WRN tables many community events with local partners to meet neighbors where they are and assist with sign ups face-to-face. The website and plan are available in English and Spanish to reach neighbors in key high-risk areas with in-language messages. Materials are also made available offline through direct mailers, flyers and events, and distributed on the ground through community message boards and food bank events, to reach neighbors who may not have internet access or devices of their own.

Social diffusion: As trusted local voices, community partners were essential to socializing the campaign, motivating residents to take action and providing invaluable knowledge at events and home visits. Partners helped spread the word about the campaign using program tools and prompts such as banners, flyers, yard signs, newsletters, and one-on-one outreach to other community-based organizations. A turnkey community partner toolkit was leveraged to engage the community with templated social media posts, newsletter and email copy, and campaign visuals. On an ongoing basis, WRN tables at community events such as festivals and cookouts to continue generating awareness. Word-of-mouth between locals, especially residents who receive a home visit and talk about it with a neighbor or who put out WRN yard signs, also generated significant interest and signups.

Track results and make adjustments:

To date, more than 5,000 neighbors have signed up for WRN and committed to take more than 27,000 actions. While the plan prescribes actions, residents must follow through to complete actions with the support of their fire district, neighbors, conservation districts and/or WA DNR. Each year, a survey is sent to past participants asking about these actions.

- In 2021, 46% of early adopters surveyed took more than 300 actions at about two actions per person. Additionally, 96% of respondents said they found the home and forest visits useful.
- In 2022, 94% of respondents surveyed took at least one action to prepare for wildfire.

To continue refining the program, After Action Reviews (AAR) — a firefighter practice of reconvening after a fire — are held with program partners at the conclusion of each season’s event and marketing campaigns. Lessons learned during AAR are used to improve future programming.

Creative Example:

Please see the “My Wildfire Ready Plan” on the following pages.

Barrier	Motivator/Benefit
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Step-by-step action plan• Get advice one-on-one from a local expert during a home or forest health visit
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Free action plans• Free home visits and forest health visits• Cost-share
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive an on-site visit from a local firefighter or conservation expert• Learn about the program and ask questions at community events
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many individual actions have significant collective impact• First responder and community safety



MY WILDFIRE READY PLAN

Name



We know that reducing wildfire risk is hard work. That's why your local wildfire experts have created a plan for you that's realistic, doable and makes sense for your property.



WILDFIRE READY TODAY: Whether you rent, own a vacation home, own a forested property, or just live in a home with a backyard, we offer clear steps to help you prepare for wildfires. It all starts with your community. Step one is to engage with your neighbors and develop a plan, because one of our best defenses against wildfire is collaboration.

WILDFIRE READY TOMORROW: The steps you take today are a great beginning, but it's important we look at wildfire resilience over the long term. Because when we get there, the payoff is huge: A wildfire-ready home and a community of neighbors who are all working together to keep it that way.

Use this **Wildfire Ready Plan** to find your starting point and map out a plan for long-term wildfire preparedness every month, every season, and every year.

KEY:



TOP PRIORITY



FREE



LOWE

ENGAGE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

Schedule time to talk with your local wildfire experts.

- Sign up for a free **Wildfire Ready Home Visit** to determine how vulnerable your property is to wildfire based on the unique characteristics of your home and its immediate surroundings. During the visit, you'll receive tailored recommendations that will help increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. Ideally, you would be present for the visit, but it's not required for completion.
- If your property is forested, sign up for a free **Forest Health Consultation** to assess your forest's health and identify potential problems and solutions. During the visit, a local forester will help you determine the management practices that best match your goals and are optimal for your forest's health.
- If you already signed up for a home visit or consultation on our website **hang tight!** Someone will be in contact with you for scheduling. If you didn't express interest in one of these services when you signed up, but would like to now, visit **wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov/visit**.

LC Support your local fire district.

- Install reflective address signs with 4-inch lettering on your home, and where your driveway meets the main road to help first responders save lives during wildfire incidents and medical emergencies.
- Volunteer! Local fire districts are always looking for new volunteers who want to serve the community and can dedicate their time. Not sure which fire district you're in? Contact your county's emergency management department.

LC Stay connected to your neighbors and lend a helping hand.

- Stay connected to your neighbors by creating a shared list of everyone's contact information. Once connected, stay engaged by talking to each other about the best way to prepare your home and properties for wildfire.
- Work with your Homeowners Association or form a neighborhood committee to create a joint action plan. You can even request a neighborhood wildfire risk assessment or look into joining the Firewise USA® recognition program to help your neighborhood collaborate to reduce fire risk. More info at [firewise.org](https://www.firewise.org).
- Team up with others in your neighborhood to lend a helping hand to those who aren't able to prepare for wildfires on their own.

LC Are you a renter? Talk to your landlord!

- If you're a renter, talk to your landlord about Wildfire Ready Neighbors and the actions in this plan. By doing so, you're helping to educate them on how to prepare your building and/or property in reducing wildfire risk. Take note that this may include steps unique to your building, like tending to flammable landscaping and common areas such as courtyards and pools.



ANNUAL ACTIONS



★ Remove all flammable items within 5 feet of your home's edges.

- Create a non-flammable perimeter by removing all flammable items within the Immediate Zone, such as debris, dead vegetation, pine needles, wood scraps and other ignitable materials such as newspapers, boxes, or firewood. This includes removing anything flammable underneath decks or porches.
- Remove flammable mulches and plants containing resins, oils, and waxes, such as arborvitae and juniper plants. Use crushed stone or gravel instead of organic materials like cedar mulch or bark. Plants within 5 feet of your home should be limited to low-growing, fire-resistant native plants and ground covers. Choose fire-resistant plants from this list found here: bit.ly/WAPlantGuide.

CREATE A DEFENSIBLE SPACE

EXTENDED ZONE

30-200 FEET AWAY FROM FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND YOUR HOME'S EDGES.

INTERMEDIATE ZONE

5-30 FEET AWAY FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND YOUR HOME'S EDGES.

IMMEDIATE ZONE

0-5 FEET AWAY FROM DECKS AND YOUR HOME'S EDGES.



THE MAJORITY OF HOMES LOST TO WILDFIRE ARE LOST DUE TO **EMBERS**



★ **Protect your home against embers.**

- To reduce ember entry, use metal panels or a 1/8-inch metal mesh to screen or box-in the area below your deck. If exterior vents are not already ember-resistant, 1/8-inch metal mesh screening should also be applied.
- The roof is the most vulnerable part of your home. If you have an untreated wood roof, it is considered an extreme danger and should be replaced with Class A fire-rated materials listed here: bit.ly/2xEy9Av. Even if your roof is fire-resistant, regularly inspect it for loose or missing shingles and replace as needed.
- Clear pine needles and leaves from your gutters and roof on a schedule that makes sense for your property – most likely on a seasonal basis.

★ **Maintain landscaping year-round.**

- A healthy plant is much more fire-resistant than a stressed one. Regular watering, pruning, and cleanup increases plant health, making them more resistant to wildfire.
- Spring and summer are high-growth times for grasses. Keep grass mowed to a height of 3 inches or less. Tall grasses spread fire rapidly, but when kept short can act as a fuel break to slow down or stop fire spread.
- Watering plants during summer helps keep them green and less flammable. Using drip irrigation and watering early morning or early evening is a water conservation-friendly way to keep things green in the summer.
- A stretch of no rain, followed by windy weather in the winter time before plants have begun to “green up” can also create conditions for rapid fire spread. Wintertime wildfires are not uncommon. Remove dry brush or dead vegetation from around immediate perimeter of the house.

Manage flammable invasive plants like Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry on your property.

- Flammable invasive plants not only spread fire more rapidly, but also outcompete native plants that are less flammable and provide important benefits for native birds and wildlife. To determine the best options for your property, visit the WA State Noxious Weed Control Board: nwcb.wa.gov.
- In general, removing the plant and its roots and seedlings helps prevent smaller infestations from spreading. For ongoing maintenance, seed or plant native species.

*See graphic on previous page for more information on zones.



SEASONAL ACTIONS



Wildfire preparedness is a year-round process. Take a look at the season-by-season actions below to keep your property, family and neighbors safe.



LC Remove flammables in the Intermediate Zone.*

- Maintain healthy flowers, plants, and grasses within 30 feet of your home. Replace flammable plants with native, fire-resistant plants. Choose fire-resistant plants from this list found here: bit.ly/WAPlantGuide.
- Move firewood to a location more than 30 feet away from your home.
- Remove debris from roof and gutters.
- If you have a large propane tank in this zone, remove debris and any live plants, including overhanging tree branches, from underneath and within 3-5 feet around the tank.



Prepare for smoky skies.

- Establish air filtration to remove fine particles from smoky air that can result in negative health effects. Learn how to DIY a box fan filter using a furnace filter and bungee cord here: bit.ly/DIYBoxFilter.
- Set AC units to re-circulate to keep smoke out of your home.

When it's smoky:

- Stay inside and stay hydrated.
- Mask up outdoors and limit your outdoor activity. N95 masks are recommended to protect against wildfire smoke.

*See graphic on page 6 for more information on zones.

□ Protect against fireworks.

- Before celebrations, clear debris out of gutters as fireworks can land in the debris and start fires.
- Remove dry brush from around your home and outbuildings.
- Hose down bark or mulch with water the day of celebrations and keep a sprinkler running in the yard throughout the day and during fireworks.



□ Prune trees and manage vegetation in the Intermediate Zone.*

- Trim branches that overhang your home, porch and deck, and prune tree branches up to 12 feet from the ground (depending on the tree's height). For shorter trees, do not trim higher than 1/3 of the overall tree height. In some cases, this may require help from a certified arborist.
- Plants containing resins, oils, and waxes, such as arborvitae and juniper trees, should be removed to reduce risk. Choose fire-resistant and drought-tolerant plants from this list found here: bit.ly/WAPlantGuide.
- Sign up for a free **Forest Health Consultation** with a local forester to learn more about specific spacing, management, and landscape recommendations for your property. If you didn't express interest for this service when you signed up for Wildfire Ready Neighbors, you can still request your consultation at wildfireready.dnr.wa.gov/visit.

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LC Make an evacuation plan and practice it with your household.

- Create an evacuation plan for you and your family that includes designated emergency meeting locations, escape routes, plans for pets and large animals, and other key items listed at [redcross.org/wildfire](https://www.redcross.org/wildfire).
- Visit [nfpa.org/disaster](https://www.nfpa.org/disaster) for a list of items to include in your Emergency Supply Kit, such as a regularly updated list of emergency contact phone numbers. And, in case you can't get home due to the nature of the emergency, be sure to keep an extra supply kit in your car.
- Sign up to receive notifications and public emergency alerts from your county's emergency management department: [mil.wa.gov/alerts](https://www.mil.wa.gov/alerts).



Wildfire Ready Neighbors is brought to you by...





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