
Alaska Firewise Communities

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Firewise Defensible Space

**Firewise
Defensible Space**

Wildfire and Your Community

- Wildfires are a fact of life for many rural Alaskan communities:
 - Many of our homes and villages are built in **Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)**
[WUI Picture](#)
 - [Ash Pit Picture](#)
 - Many are a great distance away from first responders and other resources, making evacuations and first responses challenging
 - Even fires close to first responders can be challenging!
 - With fires set to increase this century, it will be more important than ever to be prepared for wildfires.



Photos courtesy of The Weather Channel and the Anchorage Daily News. Photos available at: <https://weather.com/news/trending/video/cars-narrowly-avoid-flames-from-massive-alaska-wildfire> and: <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2019/05/28/interior-alaska-wildfire-expanding-fueled-by-high-winds/>

An Introduction to Firewise



- Firewise Communities/USA is a nationwide program, sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, to increase community knowledge and awareness of the risks of wildfire.

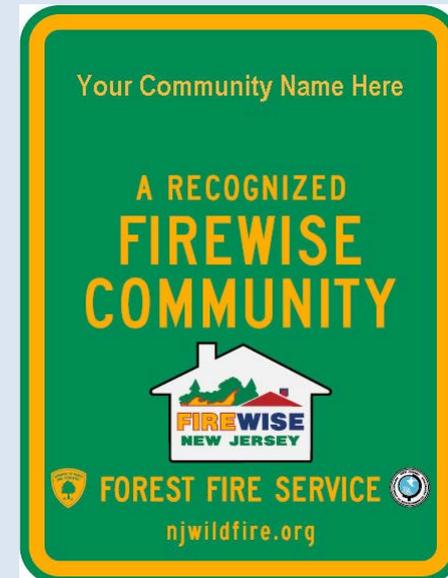


Why Choose Firewise?

- No warning to wildland fires
- Preventative actions can help prepare a community far in advance.
- Extensive time for assistance in areas.
- Community planning and engagement will be crucial to ensuring the safety of your residents.

Becoming an AK Firewise Community

- Step 1: Determine Community Risk
- Step 2: Organize a Firewise Board
- Step 3: Develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan
- Step 4: Sponsor an Event
- Step 5: Invest a minimum of \$2 per capita
- Step 6: Certification as a Firewise Community
- Step 7: Continued Certification



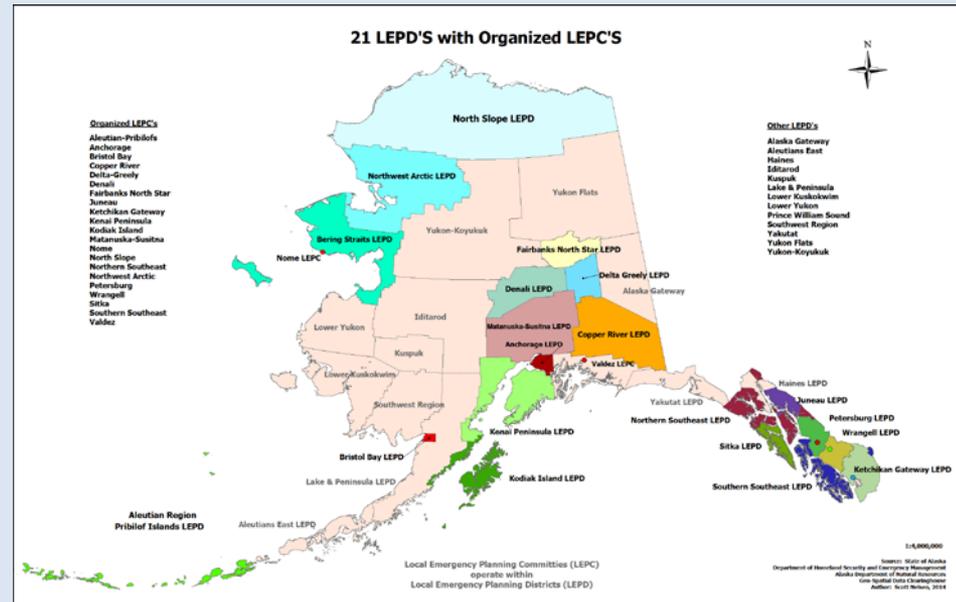
Becoming an AK Firewise Community

- What are the benefits?



Becoming an AK Firewise Community: Resources

- Talk with your LEPC
- Map shows all 21 Local Emergency Planning Districts.
- State has its own planning commission, the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), which works with LEPC and local communities on emergency preparedness.



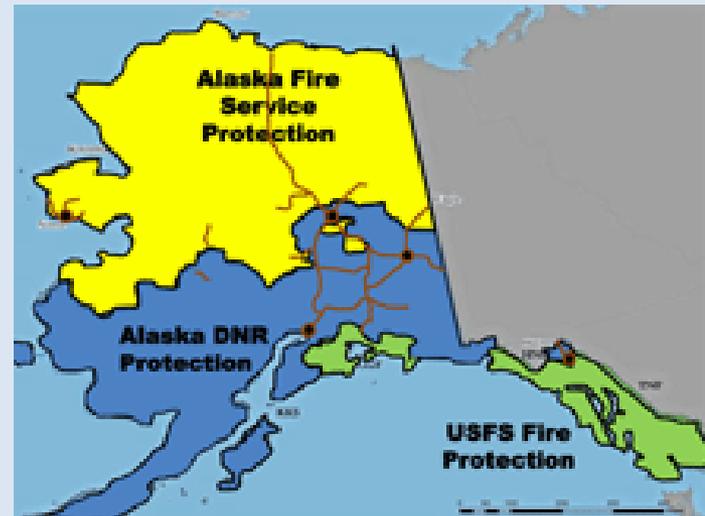
Becoming an AK Firewise Community: Resources

- For those in the Unorganized Borough, there are operations plans available through the State of **Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM)** to our large and small communities to assist in planning.
- Contact your LEPC or SERC representative to inquire about large community EOPs.
 - **No LEPC or SERC, no problem! You can contact the DHS & EM at 907-428-7084 for more information.**



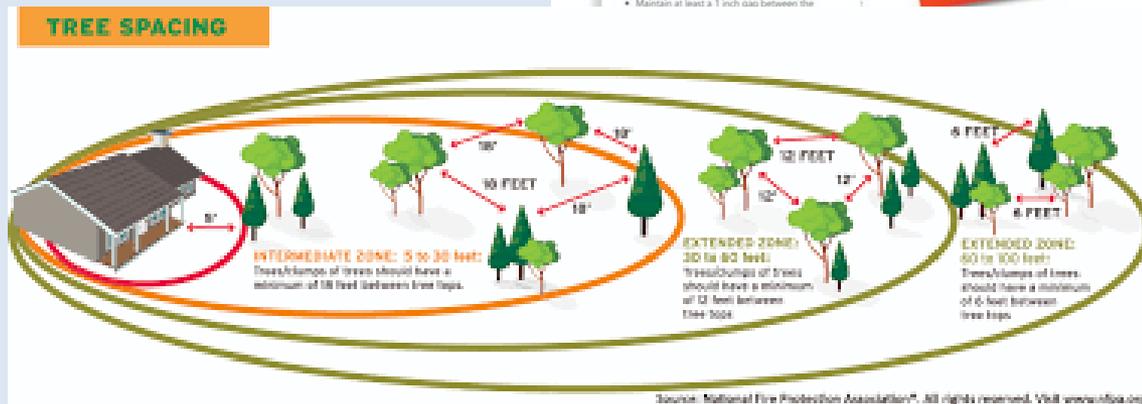
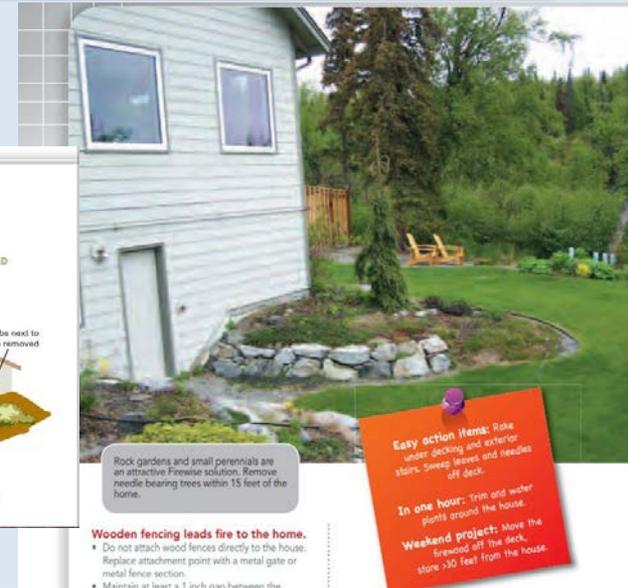
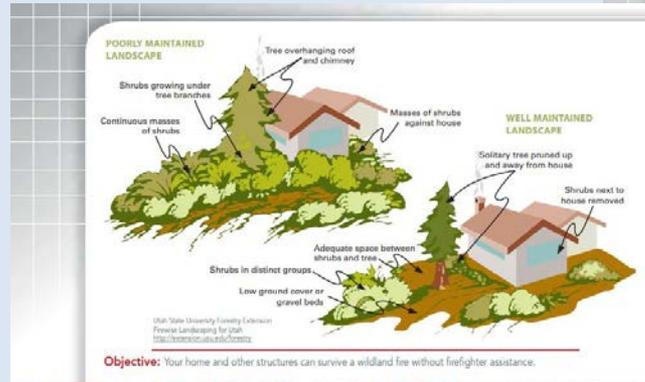
Becoming an AK Firewise Community: Resources

- **Alaska Forest Stewardship Program:**
 - Periodically provides staff to conduct home Firewise assessments.
 - Home assessments are conducted free of charge, but staff need to be available
 - This can be included in your Firewise planning, and staff time can count towards \$2 per capita investment
 - Can provide technical forestry assistance, to include planning, wildfire prevention, and fire breaks.
- Contact Stewardship Program at: **907-761-6309** to inquire as to scheduling and available staff.



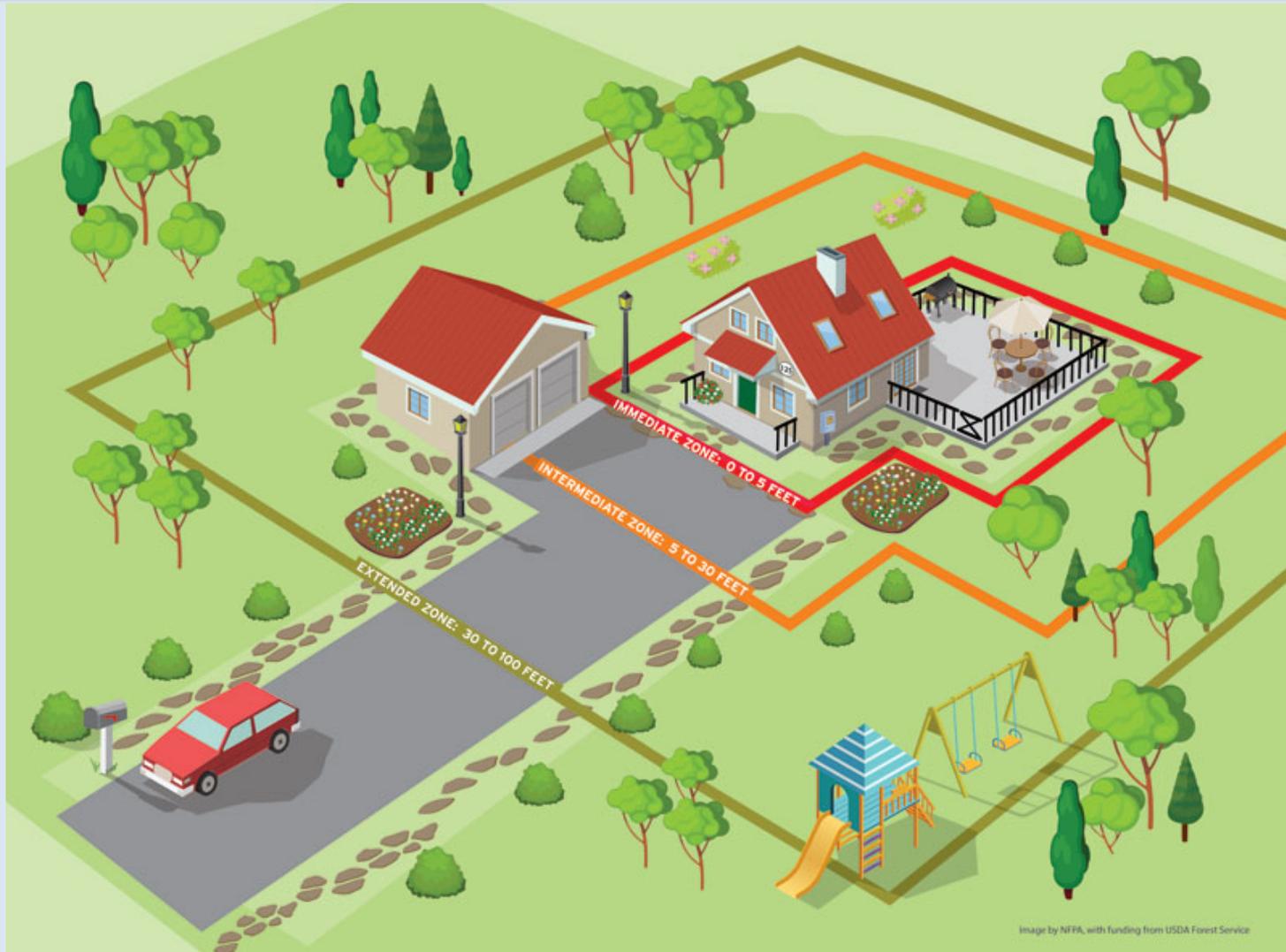
Becoming an AK Firewise Community: Homeowner Resources

- For homeowners, conduct surveys of vegetation and defensible space
- Surveys such as those to the right can assist homeowners in assessing fire risks to structures.
- Utilize the DOF “Firewise Alaska” brochure for homeowner and community guidance: [Firewise Booklet](#)
- Reach out to state/local authorities with questions.



Source: National Fire Protection Association®, All rights reserved. Visit www.nfpa.org

Becoming an AK Firewise Community: Homeowner Resources



Statewide Wildfire Resources: ADEC

- For general information regarding wildfires, there are several sources of information.
- If your community is downwind from a wildfire and you are concerned about wildfire smoke impacts, DEC-Air Quality issues air quality advisories during wildfire season.
- During the last wildfire season, DEC-AQ issued many air quality advisories throughout the state to warn residents of adverse air conditions due to wildfire.
- In communities with air quality monitoring, DEC has PM2.5 and PM10 readings.

The screenshot displays the Alaska Air Quality website interface. At the top, it states "No active advisories/episodes are currently in effect." Below this is a map of Alaska with a legend for FNSB Stage 1, FNSB Stage 2, Advisory, Air Alert, Air Warning, and Air Emergency. To the right of the map are sections for "HELPFUL AIR-RELATED LINKS", "WILD FIRE SMOKE INFORMATION", "MUNICIPAL AIR QUALITY LINKS", and "LIVE MONITORING DATA".

Below the map is a table titled "Complete Air Quality Advisories/Episodes List (Filterable by Area and Year)". The table has columns for Start, End, Area, Title, Type, Issue, and Status. The data is as follows:

Start	End	Area	Title (Click to Download PDF Document)	Type	Issue	Status
11/4/2019	11/5/2019	Central and Eastern Interior	Stage 1 Alert for North Pole Zone	FNSB Stage 1	DEC	Pending
10/28/2019	10/30/2019	Southcentral	Air Quality Advisory	Advisory	MATSU	Expired
8/28/2019	8/30/2019	Southcentral	Southcentral Alaska #2019-F40	Advisory	DEC	Expired
8/26/2019	8/28/2019	Southwest and Aleutians	Southwest Alaska #2019-F39	Advisory	DEC	Expired

Below the table is a section for "Alaska Air Quality Index (AQI) 11/4/2019 2:00 PM". It includes a "Fairbanks Area SPM PM2.5 AQI Map" and a "Southeast Alaska (Juneau)" section with a table of station readings:

Station Name	PM2.5	PM10
Floyd Dryden	3	
Butte (Mat-Su)	7	3
Garden (Anch.)	11	14
Laurel (Anch.)		13
Parkgate (Eagle River)		11

Below this is a section for "Interior Alaska (Fairbanks & North Pole)" with a table of station readings:

Station Name	PM2.5	PM10
A Street (Fairbanks)	37	
Hurst Road (North Pole)	53	
NCORE (Fairbanks)	39	20
SPM - Ann Wien Elementary	18	1
SPM - Hunter Elementary	23	3
SPM - Midnight Sun Elementary	2	8
SPM - Nordale Elementary	12	
SPM - North Star VFD#2	4	
SPM - NP Elementary	17	

On the right side of the AQI section is a "Health Effect Categories" legend with a color scale from red (Very Unhealthy) to green (Good). Below the legend is an "Explanation of Categories" section.

Statewide Wildfire Resources:

AFS, BLM, DNR-Forestry

- The Alaska Interagency Coordination Center (AICC) is the statewide coordination, logistics, and predictive services agency for the state:
 - Made up of Federal, State, and Local Agencies.
 - Encourages cross-agency communication and cooperation
 - AICC hosts the Alaska Wildland Fire Information website, www.akfireinfo.com
 - Also includes updates of BLM land clearing and brush burns when they occur
 - Fire Weather (Updated daily in fire season): [Fire Weather AICC Website](#)
 - Air Quality Modeling: [Air Quality Website](#)
- For large or small burning of debris/brush/or land during wildfire season (April 1-August 31), you need to secure a burn permit from DNR-Forestry.
- For more information, see the following DNR-Forestry website:
<https://dnr.alaska.gov/burn/fireareas>
- For red flag and fire weather warnings, see NOAA's AK Fire Weather website:
<https://www.weather.gov/arh/fire>

Statewide Wildfire Resources: ANTHC and Native Corporations

- For information on health impacts, see the ANTHC’s “Air & Healthy Homes” website: <https://anthc.org/what-we-do/community-environment-and-health/healthy-homes/>
 - ADEC partners with ANTHC on a number of ambient air quality issues, including rural issues like road dust.
 - For indoor air quality, ANTHC has several guides on how to put together air filtration systems.
 - For questions on Tribal Air Monitoring through ANTHC, or the Tribal Alaska Air Quality Workgroup, reach out to request more information.
- For questions regarding fire response and wildfire issues on corporation land, reach out to your region’s ANCSA Corporation, or your village corporation.
- Your local corporation could have open burning restrictions that differ from state restrictions.
- Before conducting open burns, verify with land managers if you can burn and the maximum allowable size of the burn. Some open burns require a permit. 15

Limiting Human-Caused Wildfires in Alaska

- What is the “Take Time to LEARN Before You Burn?”



TAKE TIME TO
LEARN BEFORE YOU **BURN**

Did you know that in a typical Alaska Fire season approximately 500 wildfires burn an estimated 650,000 acres of our state. More than 80% of these fires are human-caused resulting from careless or negligent use of fire.

Reducing the number of human-caused fires in Alaska will provide a safer environment for the public and firefighters while also assisting in reducing the loss of structures, property damage and fire suppression costs.

For the first time in 50 years, the state of Alaska and the Division of Forestry have revised the wildland fires statutes and regulations, in an effort to combat human caused fires.

SO THIS SEASON,
“TAKE TIME TO LEARN BEFORE YOU BURN.”
GO TO: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/burn>

A smaller version of the circular logo described above, located in the bottom right corner of the poster. It features the same moose, landscape, and flame elements with the same text.

Thank you!!

State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation

Air Quality Division

Non-Point Mobile Sources

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