

Missoula County Fire Adapted Communities

## Elk Meadows Ranchettes Wildfire Preparedness Team (EMRWPT)

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**Greetings** Elk Meadows Ranchettes (EMR) Homeowners and Property Owners!

Here is the June 2025 EMRWPT letter to fill you in on our 2024 accomplishments and 2025 planned activities. As always, our goal is to prepare our neighborhood to survive most wildfires, but remember it is each individual property owner's responsibility to prepare their own property and reduce the risk of wildfire.

First off, we would like to thank all the property owners that have completed full or partial mitigation on their property to reduce wildfire risk in our Firewise® USA community. We would also like to thank those property owners that have received a Wildfire Risk Site Visit. So far, we've had 27 site visits redone. Please consider getting an updated one done, here is the link to requesting a Wildfire Risk Site Visit, dnrc.mt.gov/free-visit. Thanks.

#### **Updates**

- Again for 2025 we are a nationally recognized Firewise® USA community. This means we have been recognized as encouraging and recognizing actions our neighborhood has taken to reduce community wildfire risk. We have done this by improving our wildfire readiness and initiating wildfire mitigation actions. It's an ongoing process of community commitment to wildfire safety.
- ✓ The EMRWPT completed a Firewise Risk Assessment of our neighborhood on May 16<sup>th</sup>, which is required every 5 years. During this assessment we identified two areas of improvement needed to help reduce the wildfire risk to structures. First, it is suggested that decks and porches have skirting installed (such as 1/8th inch screening) around the deck or under joists on elevated decks. Second, many residences and outbuildings would benefit from reducing flammable fuels (such as bushes, mulch and grass) from 0-5ft from the structure. Just something to work on.
- ✓ Your EMRWPT hosted the annual National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, successfully cleaning up vegetation around the neighborhood. There were 9 neighbors from EMRHA that participated throughout the day at the burn pile. We had 13 additional loads of vegetation brought to the pile that day, thank you neighbors! We had representatives from Missoula Unit/Southwest land Office (SWLO)/MT Dept of Natural Resources & Conservation (MT DNRC), and the Wildfire Mitigation Program-Missoula County Office of Emergency Management, on hand to answer any questions and signup property owners for their free Wildfire Risk Site Visit to be done on their residence/property. We had three property owners sign-up for a Wildfire Risk Site Visit. If you brought loads of vegetation to the burn pile prior to the May 3<sup>rd</sup> National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day PLEASE let us know how many trips you made and whether it was a pick-up load, trailer load or ATV load. Do not count the hours that you participated in on May 3<sup>rd</sup> event, we've got those hours covered. Here is the link to the Firewise Volunteer Hourly Worksheet,

https://www.elkmeadows.org/gallery/\_2024EMRFirewiseVolunteerHourlyWorksheet043024Color.pdf. Thanks!

- ✓ We installed Wildfire Evacuation Route signs on our two alternate evacuation routes, at the top of Wambli Lane and on Wapiti Road. Just a friendly reminder, these routes are on private property and are to be used <u>ONLY</u> <u>during emergency situations</u>.
- ✓ The EMRWPT has a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), forms and other resources listed on the Elk Meadows Ranchettes Homeowners Association website at Elkmeadows.org, I'm a Property Owner – How can I reduce Wildfire Risks. Be patient, sometimes we are in the process of updating this site.
- ✓ The EMRWPT currently does not receive any outside funds but relies on donations from the neighborhood. If you would like to donate money to help pay for Wildfire Evacuation signs and office supplies, please contact EMRWPT.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A PROPERTY OWNER TO HELP YOUR PROPERTY AND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SURVIVE MOST WILDFIRES:

- Firewise® USA Volunteer Hourly Work Sheet: PLEASE record the hours you worked removing natural vegetation from around your residence & other buildings as well as Firewise landscaping within 100ft of your residence/property on the attached Volunteer Hourly Work Sheet, from November 1, 2024, to November 1, 2025, This includes hours you have worked or contracted out. We get credit for all hours worked & costs to keep our Firewise® USA Community certification annually. Please return this worksheet to EMRWPT, either by email or USPS mail, by November 1, 2025. Removing natural vegetation from around your residence and property increases its wildfire survivability. Thanks!
- Here is the link to the Firewise Volunteer Hourly Worksheet, https://www.elkmeadows.org/gallery/\_2024EMRFirewiseVolunteerHourlyWorksheet043024Color.pdf.

For more information on the following subjects please go to the Elk Meadows Ranchettes website, **Elkmeadows.org**, **EMRWPT**. There you will find FAQ, links, forms and other resources (such as contractors, forms, letters that do mitigation work remove fuel) which you can download.

Review your property continually for Wildfire Home Ignition Zone Preparedness: To help you review your property the Missoula County Fire Protection Association created a Top 10 Wildfire Preparedness Tips on YouTube, here's the YouTube link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooSo9Xkpmss&t=103s
Request a Wildfire Risk Site Visit for your residence/property, dnrc.mt.gov/free-visit.
Install a Reflective Address Sign, if you have a decorative one consider adding a reflective one too.
<b>Sign-up for Smart911, smart911.com.</b> Sign up here to receive Missoula County emergency alerts and evacuation information.
Clear areas around fire hydrants to ensure proper access and response.
Thin your property along the roads, at least 20ft from the road edge.  Burn or chip natural fuels on your property.

If you are interested in joining the Elk Meadows Ranchettes Wildfire Preparedness Team, please let us know; we'd be happy to have you. For questions or to join EMRWPT, email EMRWPT.

### Thank you!

### Elk Meadows Ranchettes Wildfire Preparedness Team (EMRWPT)

Risa Lange-Navarro, EMRHA Neighborhood Ambassador (NA)

John Ault, Rickie Van Berkum, Charlie Janson, Aleta Fantoni EMRHA Community Members

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