



To: Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Stakeholders

From: Southwest Wildland Fire Prevention and Information Committee (SWPIC)

The federal, state, and Tribal partners of the Southwest Wildland Fire Prevention and Information Committee invite you to join us in promoting **Southwest Wildfire Awareness Week, March 23 - March 28, 2026**. This year's theme is **"Inside Out: Wildfire Preparedness Starts at Home."** Recognizing that conditions in the southwest remain warm and dry, and that wildfire embers are the leading cause of home destruction, residents can help decrease their wildfire risk by creating or enhancing defensible space around their home and property, while also assessing what home hardening measures should be taken to defend their structures.

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to reach out to your local community and media with wildfire prevention and preparedness information. A compilation of outreach resources is attached for your reference. Daily themes are also attached as examples, but feel free to develop your own local messages.

Please consider hosting a virtual community event, encouraging your local media to air public service announcements (PSAs), and sharing messages through social media throughout the week using the hashtags #SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek, #AZFire, or #NMFire.

You can obtain free Firewise USA® outreach materials, including brochures, posters, and video downloads, from www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA. A variety of wildfire prevention materials are also available for local, state, tribal, and federal partners to purchase from www.symbols.gov.

Thank you for your commitment to promoting Southwest Wildfire Awareness Week and sharing the message: **Inside Out: Wildfire Preparedness Starts at Home**. We appreciate your support!

Mike Spilde
Chair, Southwest Coordinating Group



Southwest Wildfire Awareness Week: March 23 – March 28, 2026

“Inside Out: Wildfire Preparedness Starts at Home”

OUTREACH TOOLKIT

How to Use this Toolkit: The Wildfire Safety Social Media Toolkit has safety and preparedness messages you can share on your social media channels. You can either copy these messages directly or customize them to reach your audience.

FIRE PREVENTION

- **Arizona Prevention Resources** - <https://wildlandfire.az.gov/>
- **New Mexico Prevention Resources** - <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/fire-prevention-programs/>
- **Smokey Bear** - <https://www.SmokeyBear.com>
 - Smokey Bear Videos - <https://www.youtube.com/user/Smokeybear/videos>
- **Wildfire Prevention PSAs** - <https://www.adcouncil.org/find-assets?q=wildfire%20prevention>

FIRE PREPAREDNESS & PREVENTION

- **Living with Fire – A Guide for the Homeowner**
 - [Arizona](#)
 - [New Mexico](#)
- **[Firewise USA™](#)**
- **[Ready, Set, Go!](#)**
 - [Ready, Set, Go Resources and Tools](#)
 - [Arizona Ready, Set, Go! Resources](#)
 - [New Mexico Ready, Set, Go!](#)
- **[Fire Adapted Communities](#)**
 - [New Mexico](#)
- **[Ready.gov Wildfire Safety](#)**
 - [Wildfire Safety Social Media Toolkit](#)
- **National Fire Prevention Association ([NFPA](#))**
 - [NFPA Prevention Resources](#)
- **[U.S. Fire Administration Wildfire Safety Outreach](#)**
- **[CDC Wildfire Preparedness and Response](#)**



Southwest Wildfire Awareness Week

March 23 – March 28, 2026

“Inside Out: Wildfire Preparedness Starts at Home ”

Daily Themes and Social Media Messages

Photos and Images:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Y8e9fbYPqXVCcSY1zl2L20bzbWNruBPU?usp=sharing>

Monday Inside the Home – Ready Set Go!

Introduction

This week we’ll be talking about fire preparedness and prevention. It’s not just about putting out campfires correctly or tightening your tow chains so they don’t drag during the summer months. Fire prevention starts at home and it starts with you. **Working from the inside out**, we’ll be taking this week to cover defensible space, home hardening, thinning on your property, and getting together with your community to plan for future fires. We’ll be offering tips and links and videos to help you make sense of it all. After all, spring is the best time to get prepared for the coming warmer months and the wildfires that are a part of life in the west.

Post 1 - Packing a go-bag is one of the first steps of wildfire season. Learn more about what it is and how to pack it. If you have one packed already – great! It’s time to dust it off and make sure it has all the correct Ps: prescriptions, pet and people needs, papers, Photographs, Personal computers, Plastic (credit cards).
#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZFire

Short (for X/BlueSky): Step 1 of wildfire season: Pack a go bag. Get ready to get out.

Make sure your bag has all the 6 Ps:

- Prescriptions
- Pet and people needs
- Papers (like SS cards)
- Photographs
- Personal computers
- Plastic (credit cards)

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZFire

Post 2 - Wanna know the latest update on emergencies? Signing up for county emergency alerts can make all the difference when it comes to wildfire evacuations. Even following your county’s fire and public safety Facebook pages will help when a disaster strikes. We may not like all social media, but Facebook notifications from municipal and county agencies can be critical when disaster strikes.

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZFire

Short: 🚨 Want to know the latest on emergencies? Sign up for your county's alert system and

follow them on Facebook.

Social media may not be perfect, but those notifications can be critical when disaster strikes.
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Tuesday - Zero – 5 feet zone

Post 1 - The Home Hazard Ignition Zone is actually the 100 foot radius around your house. But what about your house itself? This is called the Zero Zone, and there are ways you can protect it and harden it from wildfire embers. Remember! [Embers](#) are the leading cause of home destruction in a wildfire, and they can be as small as a thumbnail. [Click here](#) to learn about embers and hardening your structure.

Short: Embers can be as small as a thumbnail and are the leading cause of home loss in a wildfire. Protect your Zero Zone (your home) and Home Ignition Zone (100 ft radius) from ember attack. Learn more at readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/hardening-your-home

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZFire

Post 2 - Heard of [Firewise](#)? It's a great program to get your community involved in fire mitigation and home protection. But it's got a new partner – the [Wildfire Prepared Program](#). Newly available in New Mexico and soon to come in other states – residents can sign up, get assessed, and get a certificate of home hardening for their insurance company. If you're a Firewise Community, you might be more than halfway there already!

Short: Heard of Firewise? It's got a new partner: the Wildfire Prepared Program, available now in NM. Sign up, get assessed and get a home hardening certificate for your insurance. Learn more at wildfireprepared.org

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire

Wednesday - 5-100 ft Zone

Post 1- The area around your home can be just as important when it comes to protecting your home itself. The 5-100 foot zone can be protected by breaking up any tree canopies, limbing up individual trees, moving propane tanks or firewood piles away from structures and mowing grasses down to below 4 inches. Have questions? Want some advice? Reach out to your local or county Fire Department and ask if they can assist with a home assessment.

Short: The Home Ignition Zone: This 5-100 ft. radius is the critical buffer to protect your home from wildfire. Break up tree canopies, cut low limbs, move propane tanks/firewood and mow that grass. Questions? Your local fire dept. can help!

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZFire

Post 2 - For many folks, creating and maintaining defensible space involves talking with your neighbors. The 5-100 zone can often include your neighbor's yard. This video shows how home to home fire spread in areas with multiple structures can be devastating. Might be a good time this spring to say hello over the fence and start a conversation about what you're both doing to decrease your wildfire risk –

Short: Howdy, neighbor!

It takes a village to prepare for wildfire. Defensible space goes beyond your yard: Talk to your neighbors about what you're both doing to lower your wildfire risk.

Learn more: wildfirerisk.org/community-tools

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire / #AZfire

Links

CoCo mitigation community best practices - [Community Wildfire Mitigation Best Practices Toolbox – Coalitions & Collaboratives](#)

Community Tools - [Community Tools - Wildfire Risk to Communities](#)

Thursday - Burning Outside

VISUAL Before, During, and After - the three stages of safe debris burning:

- **BEFORE:** Check weather, create firebreaks, gather tools, contact your local Fire authority
- **DURING:** Monitor constantly, keep water ready
- **AFTER:** Ensure completely out, cold to touch #SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek

Post 1 - Did you know? Agricultural and Debris burning are the #1 human-caused fire start in the southwest. Burning fields is a cultural and traditional practice in New Mexico, and it has benefits when done safely and correctly. But our emphasis is on the safe and correct part.

Remember:

- Check for any local fire restrictions
- Check the weather: don't burn on hot, dry or windy days
- Afternoons are high risk! Most wildfires start 2-5pm when conditions are hot & dry. Be cautious when burning in the afternoon

Short: Agriculture/debris burning is the #1 human-caused wildfire start in the Southwest.

Burning is an important practice in NM -- when done safely. Check local fire restrictions and weather and don't burn in the heat of the day (2-5 p.m.)

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Post 2 - Burning debris often? Use a burn barrel! Make sure it's properly ventilated and has a 1/8" screen cover to prevent spark escape. Learn more about burn barrels here: [Backyard Debris Burning](#)

Stay safe and protect your property while burning debris by following these six tips:

- Contact your local fire authority.

- Avoid burning on dry, windy days, when a fire can easily get out of control.
- Clear a 10-foot space from around your burn pile. Keep your burn pile small.
- Be prepared. Have a source of water and a shovel nearby.
- Never leave your burn pile. Stay until it is completely out.

Short: Burning debris often?

- Use a burn barrel with ventilation and an 1/8" screen cover
- Clear a 10-foot zone
- Never leave your burn unattended

Want more on how to burn safely? Check out this video for steps:

youtube.com/watch?v=zh0YCWp6Q50

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Friday - WUI Buffers and CWPP

Post 1 – Forest treatments near communities can help decrease fire risk. These treatments can come in all shapes and sizes, from hand-thinning and limbing to using powerful machines to do the work. This article about Pine Lake, AZ demonstrates how a community came together to help protect their buffer areas. Link to article: [Pine Lake at high risk for wildfires, so Arizona invests in prevention](#)

Short: Treating forests around communities helps lower wildfire risk. Treatments come in all shapes and sizes, from hand-thinning to machinery.

This Pine Lake, AZ, community came together to protect their buffer areas: tinyurl.com/4h2e4t63

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Post 2 – What’s a CWPP anyway? [Community Wildfire Protection Plans](#) (CWPPs) may sound like just another acronym or a whole lot of words, but they’re actually a critical step for a community or even a county to identify potential fire risk, shape future WUI treatments, and most importantly, create grant opportunities for funding to support these efforts. Money doesn’t grow on trees, but creating a CWPP can help your community become eligible for federal and state grants and other funding. They can also be critical for deciding what a community will do in the event of a catastrophic wildfire. [Link here] to find out whether your community or county has a CWPP and whether it needs updating!

Short: What's a CWPP, anyway?

Community Wildfire Protection Plans are critical tools for communities to ID their high-risk zones and shape future treatments -- and open grant opportunities!

Learn about yours: [link]

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Saturday - Defending Your Home, Defending First Responders

Post 1 – Defensible space protects first responders too! While you’re evacuating, firefighters are making their way into your community – one of the best ways to protect them is to have plenty of clearance into your drive, or a turn-around at the end. There are [other measures](#) you can take: This video from the [LA Fire Department](#) has some great tips that wrap up much of what we’ve shown this week about defensible space, and about how turn-around zones help firefighters defend themselves and your property from wildfire.

Short: Defensible space protects first responders, too!

Help firefighters get in and out with driveway clearance and a turn-around at the end.

Learn how defensible space helps firefighters defend themselves:

[youtube.com/watch?v=zJocTdTLKrY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJocTdTLKrY)

#SouthwestWildfireAwarenessWeek #NMFire

Post 2 – Think wildfire won't happen to you? Sadly, you're not alone. Many residents put off working on defensible space and structure protection because they simply think their number won't come up when a wildfire strikes. This video series from Frontline illustrates what can happen when the worst happens. The [Camp fire](#) (2019); [Lahaina fire](#) (2023)

We hope you've enjoyed this week of learning and education about fire prevention around the home. Remember: wildfire prevention starts from the Inside Out.

Short: Think wildfire won't happen to you?

You're not alone. Many people put off creating defensible space because they think it won't happen here.

Hear it from residents of the Camp and Lahaina Fires: [links]

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