

FBM Firewise Community Meeting

January 29, 2020, 6:00 – 7:30

Attendees: Ted Beedy, Susan Sanders, Larry Gruver, Anne & John Shuls, Ann Westling, Ruth Berliner, Jeff and Gale Peach, Dave Fournier, Bob Hanna, Arnold Forman, Jim Brake, Jim Mathias, Barry Angel, Audrey Height, Nicki Jim Wilkinson, Tim Edge, Carville Hayes, Bob Anderson, Joan Hardy, Neal Rascliff, XX Anderson, Larry Engel, Marlee Chamberlin, Peggy Slaker, Kit Elliott (County Counsel Nev Co), Barbara Hoff

Welcome/Introductions

- Reiterated Firewise mission – Educate and energize BM area residents into action concerning making our community more fire safe.
- Jeff described handouts available – “Creating Defensible Space to Help Survive a Wildfire Ember Storm” from CA Firesafe Counsel
- Jeff reviewed objectives of the meeting.
- New map of neighboring Firewise communities (Banner Mt, Cascade Shores, Greenhorn) to assist with assessment of evacuation routes. – Jeff will put the map of neighboring Firewise communities on the FBM website.

Google Visitation Map

- Arnold Forman presented the Google map he developed that pinpoints addresses that have been visited by committee members. Tracks addresses only, date visited (no personal information). **Green** = successful connection; **yellow** = left material; **red** = no luck locked gate, dogs etc.
- Can do this by hand, or can receive a blank spreadsheet to fill out and Jeff will load onto the map.
- Currently for internal use only for this group, not on webpage

CalFire Update – Jim Mathias (North Operations Division Chief-Nevada, Placer, Yuba, Sierra counties)

- **Generator Safety** – examples from recent PSPS fires – lessons learned
 - Generator enclosure had rats nest and debris in it, next to hours.
 - Poorly maintained generators – gas line ended up crumbling and failing when started the generator. Need to run the gas out of the gas lines regularly.
 - Incorrect installation by previous owner resulting in backfeed. Was on concrete pad away from home, but wiring was not installed by professional, with no switchover and when PG&E re-energized the lines a “poop” happened and caught on fire. Just affected generator since on concrete pad.
- Generator Risks
 - Shock –
 - can backfeed thru the entire system unless installed correctly, risk to PG&E workers who assume lines are non-energized

- Need transfer switch installed by a professional (safely switches power from PG&E to generator)
 - Carbon monoxide poisoning hazards –
 - more than 900 people died of carbon monoxide poisoning, while using portable generators from 2005-2017.
 - Carbon monoxide poisoning hazards -symptoms is headaches (pressure behind eyes), red face/eyes, nausea, dizziness, breathlessness, collapse, loss of consciousness. Keep generator away from home
 - If show symptoms, get to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention
 - Carbon monoxide is colorless, tasteless.
 - Never use generator indoors or in enclosed spaces
 - Need 3-4 feet of clear space on all sides of generators
 - Do not use near doors, windows, vents (including air vents to bathrooms)
 - Fire from improper fueling a generator or inappropriately storing fuel
 - Generators run hot and remain hot. Let it cool down (at least on hour) before refueling because gas can ignite if it hits hot engine parts. Don't smoke while refueling.
 - Fuel storage – keep containers away from flame-producing and heat-generating devices (e.g., generator itself, water heaters, cigarettes, lighters, matches). Store fuels away from living areas.
 - Senate just passed a bill to make PG&E help pay for better home generators
 - Noise/vibration.
- **Burn Permits**
 - In spring (early April) require burn permits. From June/July thru Oct or so, have burn permits, thereafter open burning. Just check to make sure it is a burn day. (either open burning, can burn as big a pile as you want as long as it doesn't leave the property). Permit is free.
 - Nevada County residents (not city limits of Grass valley or Truckee). Get permit at CalFire or on line <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/>
 - Can burn anything that naturally grew on YOUR property. Neighborhood burn piles require permit from Air Pollution Control District.
 - Limit leaves and pine needles
 - Cannot burn the following: plywood, OSB, trash (plastic, cardboard, waste oil, clothing, insulation, painted material, dimensional lumber of any kind).
 - Burn barrels not allowed – incomplete combustion, air quality hazard.
 - Does burning damage the soil? – Dave described US Forest Service research – large material with intense heat for a long time can get soil reddening, but needs long, intense heat.
 - Before burning check for wildlife first – disrupt piles first to evict them before setting the fire.
 - Ted recommended covering piles to ignite quickly despite recent rains.

- John Shultz said that for unimproved parcels cannot get a free permit – air quality control district will give a fine.
- **Alternatives to burning**
 - Chipping, compost, curbside greenwaste pickup. Grants trying to increase alternatives to burning, applied for grants for that.
- **Burn Pile Guidelines**
 - Pile can be no bigger than 4 ft around, 4ft high. Use feeder piles if have more to burn. Need 10 feet of clearance to bare mineral soil all around.
 - Must have hand tools (shovel, rake)
 - Must be in attendance at all times.
 - Must have burn permit.
 - Must have minimum of 5 gallons of water – need garden hose where end of hose can reach fire.
 - Any fire that goes to someone else’s property is illegal, and you are liable for any damages to neighbors property.

WUI Drill Ann Westling & Bob Hanna

- May 31, 2020
- WUI = Wild Urban Interface “Where the people meet the woods”
- Simulation and drill for firefighters and Sheriff’s office have been going on for a while, and for the past few years the public has been involved.
- Exercise will affect everyone in the Banner Mt/Cascade Shores area -opportunity to do an evacuation. Code Red Alert will go out to everyone “This is a drill, but evacuate – will be doing fire exercise.” Opportunity to practice their evacuation plan. Hope for lots of participation to see what happens in a real evacuation.
- Areas for drills and leaders:
 - New Forest Knolls - *Bob Hanna*
 - Old Forest Knowles *Ann Westling*
 - Mayflower – *Ruth Berliner*
 - Upper Deer Creek Park – *Carv Hase*
 - Upper Banner Lava Cap/Wings of Moring - *John and Ann Shulse*
 - Cascade Shores
- Need 15 houses per area in these subareas
- Communications:
 - Anne is working with Calfire communications officer to develop a communication plan. Will describe who needs info, what info, when need the info, who will do the tasks. Community involvement: what does Firewise Community want to achieve. What steps to take, who will do the tasks. How to measure this is successful, how to document it.
- Evacuation Route maps? Jeff said we are working on that. Jim said to look at Google Maps and try these routes out. Some routes have locked gates. –
- WUI Drill Schedule

- Morning briefing at Rood Center, public welcome. Treating it like a real, active fire will set up scenario. Paramedics, engines, animal rescue, sheriffs, CHP will be in attendance.
- Meet and Greet – fire personnel will visit volunteer homes
- Code Red goes out to Banner Mountain and Cascade Shorts
- Fire drill and Enforcement
- Barbecue for fire personnel.
- Volunteers needed:
 - Meet and greet for defensible space. Engine captains will come out to resident who has volunteered – engine captain could give defensible space discussion, how property might be defended, improvement to property to make it more firesafe. What to tell the fire crew (ammo or propane tanks that might be a hazard)
 - Fire Drill – volunteer home for fire drill exercises.
 - Role Players – heart attack, car accident, animal rescue, garage door failure, burn victims, robbery.
 - Feeding the First Responders – serving food, clean up, donations – at Rood Center. Will take place at the food center. Debriefing before the barbecue at the Rood Center. Value for community building.

Questions:

- Will there be handouts? Ann will have handouts, and recommend going to neighbors to encourage them to participate. Handout will have way to sign up for code red. Encourage everyone to treat it like a real drill, time themselves on how long it takes.
- Any sirens? Maybe – not everyone has signed up for code red. If fire happens during PSPS event, phones go out after a few days. Sheriff will do door to door if necessary.
- How were areas determined? Matt Wallen helped delineate it.
- Volunteers contact Jeff

Next Meetings – all at 6:00 at Madelyn Helling Library

- March 11, 2020
- May 13, 2020
- Sept 9, 2020
- Oct 14, 2020