

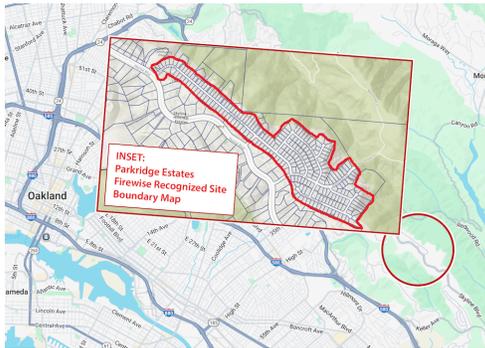
Supporting Oakland
and surrounding areas
in reducing the risks of
wildfire danger to people,
property and environs



EDUCATION
ADVOCACY
PROGRAMS
COMMUNITY BUILDING

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PARKRIDGE ESTATES FIREWISE SITE: Oakland's Largest to Date!



Parkridge Estates is a well-established neighborhood of **approximately 250 homes** entirely East of Skyline Blvd. With an eastern perimeter that abuts Anthony Chabot Regional Park, they are **truly on the “front lines” of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)**.

Frank Dauby, resident Firewise lead, shared:

"Parkridge Estates has had an active neighborhood association for many years focused on reducing crime as well as emergency preparedness. We also like to have fun and have had a neighborhood “block party” since 1974.

After the L.A. Fires in January of 2025 several of us met and decided to form a committee of homeowners to improve our neighborhood’s fire resilience with a short-term goal of becoming a Firewise recognized community in 2025..." **READ THEIR STORY**



See how OFSC can help your neighborhood group with the NFPA Firewise USA® recognition process – visit our program page **FIREWISE USA® FOR OAKLAND**

JOIN US ONLINE – OFSC FEBRUARY MEETING

February's Special Presentation – Alameda County wildfire defensible space recommendations, AC Alert and Genasys Protect: Breanne Slimick, Wildfire Prevention and Emergency Preparedness, Alameda County Fire Department. Meeting **AGENDA**



OFSC MEETING (ONLINE)
 Wednesday, February 18, 2026
 7:00-8:30pm
REGISTER

We welcome everyone from all Oakland and East Bay communities to observe, participate, and/or get involved.

WILDFIRE SAFETY PRESENTATION

Recording and Resources

On January 14th, an online **Wildfire Safety Presentation** was hosted by the Garden Guild, Montclair Presbyterian Church and OFSC. Guest speakers were Darin White - Fire Marshal, Oakland Fire Department, Jared Savas - Constituent Services Liaison for Oakland D4 City Councilmember Janani Ramachandran, Doug Mosher, Wendy Goldsby and Joelle Fraser - OFSC, and Julia Blitch - B&B Horticulture Design.

Annual Inspection Program

- 23,578 initial inspections scheduled
- Total Compliance 23,316 (91.2%) inspections
- 27,240 total inspections completed

Harden Your Home Against Wildfire

Wildfire **embers**, radiant heat and direct flame contact ignite structures

Embers cause 60-90% of fires

NFPA Firewise USA® Program

FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

PLANT SELECTIONS

- PLANTS THAT ARE SUCCULENT, SEMI-SUCCULENT AND HAVE HIGH WATER CONTENT FOLIAGE ARE MOST FIRE RESISTANT
- CHOOSE PLANTS THAT AREN'T WAXY OR OILY
- SELECT APPROPRIATELY SIZED PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN
- PLACE SMALLER, HIGHER WATER USE PLANTS WITH A MORE OPEN STRUCTURE CLOSER TO YOUR HOME, DECKS, DRIVEWAYS, AND THE ROAD
- PLACE LARGER PLANTS FURTHER OUT FROM THESE SPACES, AND MAKE SURE THEY'RE APPROPRIATELY SPACED FROM EACH OTHER
- AVOID EXCEPTIONALLY MESSY PLANT SELECTIONS
- DON'T BE AFRAID OF A LITTLE OPEN SPACE IN THE GARDEN!

MULCH OPTIONS

BARK MULCH
Do not use bark mulch and remove if possible

GRAVEL
Lovely for dry gardens and xeriscape designs

TOPSOIL/COMPOST
A perfect option for most gardens. A small amount of leaf litter (less than 3") can provide natural mulch.

Presenters provided useful and practical information on **home hardening, Zone Zero, Firewise, and firescaping.**

If you missed or wish to review it, [watch the recording](#). A summary of the presentation, questions and answers, and announcements are in this [PDF](#). More information on the presentation is [here](#) on the OFSC website.

OFSC AND DEFENSIBLE SPACE ASSESSMENT

Last month, **four of our Oakland Firesafe Council Board members** took part in a two-day CAL FIRE Defensible Space Assessor training.



The class, organized by the Alameda County Coordinator, was attended by multiple local fire agencies, firesafe councils and Firewise communities.



Through this training, we deepened our knowledge of home hardening, defensible space and how to identify wildfire hazards around a home.

Our team is developing plans to put these new skills into action to serve our community! Please stay tuned...

In the meantime, are you interested in more information on home hardening? Check out this [CAL FIRE Linktree](#) of helpful resources.

~ Contributed by Maryanne Hubbard, OFSC Board Secretary and training attendee

FUEL REDUCTION IN GARBER PARK ON MLK DAY



3 of the 4 Claremont workers



All that fuel.... Bye bye!



Loading a 20-yard dumpster

MLK Day of Service brought volunteers offering helpful hands all around our city. One project shared with OFSC was the incredible fuel reduction work at Garber Park. The cleanup was organized by Nancy Mueller (Secretary of the Board, Claremont Canyon Conservancy) and sponsored by the North Hills Community Association and Garber Park Stewards, a program of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy that's one of Oakland Wildland Stewards ([OWLS](#)) group. A donation for lunch came from local realtor, Amanda Gordon.

The occasion brought around 40 workers, including a few kids, to help support fuel reduction. Kudos to all the organizers and volunteers for your work!

Waste Management said that the 20-yard dumpster weighed in at 2.5 tons – all hand-carried by 35 volunteers!



Fred Booker: King of the Dumpster (and a regular at OFSC meetings) – one more load of pine branches was added!



Some of the crew (Nancy M. in red vest) – in total there were 35-40 workers which included about 3 families with kids.

Thanking Nancy Mueller for submitting this great story of cooperation and service. We love seeing your impact in the community – [share your projects](#) with us to be featured in our newsletter!

FIRE PREPAREDNESS AND WILDLIFE AWARENESS



A timely reminder from WildCare: Help reduce the risk of wildfires in your neighborhood and help baby wildlife by **timing your work before baby season**. Though based in Marin, WildCare's advice generally applies to us here in the East Bay as well – major pruning and vegetation removal are best done from November to February to reduce the risk of harming nesting wildlife.



They do note that some species are already nesting in January and February, but work is possible if done with care...

Look for signs of nesting wildlife before trimming trees or clearing brush. To learn how to tell if there are nests and see other related information and resources, visit WildCare's [Fire Mitigation Before Wildlife Baby Season](#).

Thanking WildCare for their permission to share their excellent content and photos.

Check for wildlife before doing work! If you're based in Oakland and have a general question about wildlife or need assistance with wildlife, contact one of [Oakland Animal Services Wildlife Partners](#).

WILDFIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION Report on the January Meeting



**By Elizabeth Stage, OFSC Board Member and
Wildfire Prevention Commissioner**

Oakland's [Wildfire Prevention Commission](#) (WPC) met on January 15th and spent most of the meeting discussing inspections.

Both OFD Chief Damon Covington and Assistant Fire Marshal Javan Smith said that they were committed to increasing the credibility of the results. They are embedding quality improvement into training and reviewing reports.

When asked about having inspectors go into back yards, they addressed several barriers to access including being on private property without permission (which requires consent from the resident), gates, threatening dogs, and, on a few rare but upsetting occasions, residents calling 911 about the intruder. OFD will continue to work on ways to make this work better. It's clear that they are aware of the challenges they face and they hope to improve things step-by-step.

The next meeting of the Commission is Thursday, February 19th, 7pm at City Hall.

The WPC serves as the public oversight body for Measure MM funding, providing an estimated \$2.7 million annually to support vegetation management activities in Oakland to reduce wildfire risk.

HOME HARDENING WEBINAR



Monday / March 9 / 2-3pm / Online

"Making Your Home Fire Resistant (Hardening Your Home)" hosted by [Pacific Region Garden Clubs](#) with Laura Blaul, Senior Wildfire Fellow with the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS). This is the second in a series of five 1-hour Firewise Webinars to help you reduce your risk of loss from wildfire.

Tell your Garden Club friends, your neighbors, your local fire department, and even your local Firewise Communities about this special informative series. [Register](#)

MORE OF NOTE

- New guide from California Firesafe Council – **"Surviving Wildfire: Your Guide for Protecting Your Family, Property, and Pets"**. Created to help residents and communities learn to live safely with fire, it walks you through the steps you can take before and during a fire to prevent loss and promote safety. [PDF](#)
- **"Oakland's fire department has a secret weapon – a candid spokesperson"** – Michael Hunt, OFD's chief of staff, is unlike many Oakland public information officers, answering calls and dishing out facts while leaning on the side of transparency. By Roselyn Romero, *The Oaklandside* [Article](#)
- **United Policyholder's Wildfire Risk Reduction and Asset Protection (WRAP) Working Group:**
 - February Meeting on Tuesday, 2/24, at 1pm – Guest Jacy Hyde, Executive Director of the California Fire Safe Council, will present an update on CA Fire Safe Council's recent legislative success and their County Coordinator positions. [Register](#)
 - January Meeting (1/20) [Recording](#)
- The next meeting of **East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWCG)** will be Wednesday, March 25th, 9am-12pm, at 2180 Mivvia St. Berkeley, CA 94704 - Redwood Room. Agenda and meeting materials are posted closer to that date at on their [website](#)
- "When lightning strikes: Models of multi-ignition wildfires could predict catastrophic events" – New model from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory could **help firefighters protect crews** by predicting how multiple-front fires could move and merge. [Read](#)

AND FINALLY

- NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS – Our newsletter is published once a month, about one week before our third Wednesday of the month meeting. If you have something you'd like to announce or share, send along a submission by the **first Monday** of the month for consideration. EMAIL: outreach@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org
- Was this newsletter forwarded to you? Join our mailing list: **SUBSCRIBE**
- The following OFSC meeting is on March 18th



Oakland Firesafe Council (OFSC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the risks of wildfire danger to people and property through preparedness education, programs and materials, outreach, advocacy and volunteer opportunities.
CONTACT

OFSC free services and communications are received by thousands in Oakland and the East Bay. We're only able to continue doing this with the help of donors like you.

SUPPORT

Oakland Firesafe Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Donations are tax-deductible.

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