

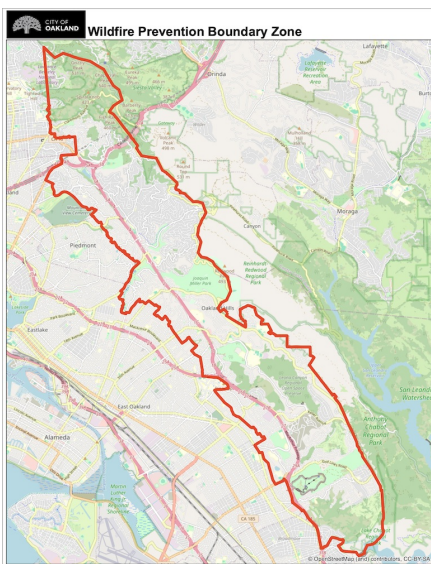
Supporting Oakland and Alameda County in reducing the risks of wildfire danger to people and property



EDUCATION  
ADVOCACY  
PROGRAMS  
COMMUNITY BUILDING

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## THE OAKLAND HILLS REMAIN A VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE!



In February, CAL FIRE released **drafts of new maps for Local Responsibility Areas (LRA)** Fire Hazard Severity Zones for 90 days of public comment. In Oakland and many other jurisdictions in the East Bay, these new maps substantially reduced the acreage designated as Very High, High, and Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zones compared with previous maps.

On June 18th, with little fanfare, Oakland Fire Department Chief Damon Covington presented a recommendation to the City of Oakland - Local Government City Council that, instead of CAL FIRE's February maps, Oakland should adopt the **Wildfire Prevention Zone (WPZ) boundaries** (the same language and map that was used in Measure

MM) "following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of Government Code Section 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area." After a few questions, the Council **voted unanimously** to accept Chief Covington's recommendation that the entire WPZ be designated as a **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ)**.

For the near term, **no further changes** to Oakland's maps are anticipated...

**READ the complete post** by OFSC President, Elizabeth Stage.

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### Oakland Mayor and Councilmembers weigh in on wildfire safety

In early July, Mayor Barbara Lee held a press conference in the Firestorm Memorial Garden (on Hiller Avenue near the site of the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire) and reaffirmed her campaign promise and 100 day plan to take wildfire prevention seriously. She specifically called out the goats and the important and extensive work that they do in the City. Council President Kevin Jenkins and Councilmember Janani Ramachandran, who represent most of the WPZ, were also present and they subsequently shared that message.



From Mayor Barbara Lee on Instagram (@mayorbarbaralee, 7/2/2025):

"Oakland is meeting the moment on wildfire prevention and we're doing it together thanks to CAL FIRE crews, the Oakland Fire Department, Civicorps youth, the Office of Public Works, and numerous community partners..."

[See post](#)



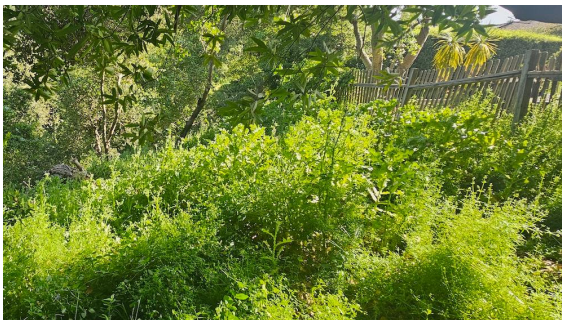
According to Oakland City Council President Kevin Jenkins' July Newsletter, designating the Wildfire Prevention Zone as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) is an

"important step that will:

- Enforce stronger building and land use rules in high-risk areas
- Support ongoing vegetation management
- Improve access to state and federal wildfire prevention funds

The move builds on decades of fire data, community support like Measure MM, and lessons from the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire, which caused devastating loss."

## PG&E FUEL REDUCTION GRANT



The Oakland Firesafe Council was awarded a \$150,000 grant from PG&E to implement 11 fuel reduction projects across the Oakland Hills. These initiatives are currently underway, marking a significant investment in wildfire mitigation efforts for the region.

**The first project was completed on June 30th and a very happy resident had this to share:**

"I can't thank you enough for your help in getting the PGE "Fuel Reduction Grant". It was so needed because of the





amount of growth in the canyon. I continue to be surprised at how much there is and what a fire hazard it can be ... I am so pleased with the job that they [the contractors] did. I can now see down the hillsides on 2 sides of my house ... It looks like a different place. I am more than thrilled with the finished product. I feel like my house is safer and better prepared to withstand a wildfire. Hopefully, it will never be tested!" ~ N. Watson, Skyline Blvd.

## Residents in Piedmont Pines had this to say about their project:

"We wanted to write to express our appreciation for the remarkable work that just concluded on our property. The crew finished after three days of intensive work, and we're genuinely impressed by the transformation. We hope our experience might encourage other property owners to participate in your fire mitigation program ...

The results have exceeded our expectations. The redwoods received careful thinning that now allows air circulation and filtered sunlight to reach the forest floor. The invasive privets that had been creating dangerous fuel ladders and obscuring our oaks and buckeyes have been removed. The native trees were pruned to reduce fire risk while maintaining their natural form and health. The removal of a hazardous cypress threatening the power lines was particularly complex. Watching the crew coordinate this challenging task demonstrated their skill and experience ...

While there will certainly be an adjustment period as we adapt to the more open landscape, we recognize this work as essential for both safety and ecological health. Several neighbors approached us during the three days of work, inquiring about the crew after seeing the quality of their efforts – a testament to the positive impact this program has on the broader community.

We're also grateful for the educational resources you regularly provide. Your newsletters, workshops, and guidance have been invaluable in helping us understand defensible space principles and fire preparedness. We'll continue to rely on these materials as we maintain our property going forward.

Thank you for the important work you do for our community and for making this transformation possible." ~ Sincerely, Chris & Tina, Oakland Hills Residents



**Read more [HERE](#) & stay tuned for periodic updates on progress!**



WHAT CAN YOU DO AROUND YOUR HOME?

Review OFSC Guide [Defensible Space & Firescaping](#)

On the last Sunday in June, our volunteers were at the Montclair Village Farmers Market spreading the word about OFSC, giving out information and answering questions on wildfire preparedness.



According to volunteer Wendy, it seemed the majority of visitors to our table had never heard of OFSC – though there were some who knew about us through the Firewise program or neighborhood councils. A number of people were also not aware of AC Alerts and their evacuation zone. Wendy thinks we can safely say that the tabling event was a success in that it got a lot more people (~ 80!) thinking about preparedness and aware of how OFSC can help support them. We were also happy to add many new subscribers to our OFSC newsletter!

Keep an eye out for our next appearance and if this newsletter was forwarded to you but you'd like to officially subscribe, sign up [HERE](#)



Thanking volunteers Christophe, Maryanne, and Wendy for taking valuable time out of their weekend to help keep our community fire-safe! Interested in helping out? We'd love to have you! Please get in touch: [info@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org](mailto:info@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)

## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2025 – AUGUST 5th



National Night Out (NNO) is time for neighbors to get together to build neighborhood spirit and unity, introduce Emergency Preparedness ideas, and raise crime prevention awareness. Research shows that when neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer.

Organize a block party, barbeque, ice cream social, or other outdoor event that brings neighbors together.

The City of Oakland staff, Oakland Fire Department and Police Department personnel and elected officials will be out roaming the neighborhoods and will visit as many parties as possible. [Learn more & register](#) to host a party (by July



For a list of OFSC's suggested information that you can print out for and/or electronically share with your NNO group, email [prepare@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org](mailto:prepare@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)

## YOUR FEEDBACK IS REQUESTED

**WUI-Go!** is a UC Berkeley startup developing innovative products to strengthen community resilience through personalized wildfire evacuation planning. They have created a custom, short podcast (under 4 minutes) that summarizes the Top 5 Most Important Actions to take to be better prepared for a wildfire or any other disaster.



This podcast was generated using AI – no people were recorded – from a digital scan of the information on our website and in our **Guides**. This is an innovative technology that can be used to create other short podcasts on a variety of wildfire and disaster preparedness topics, and it gives us another mechanism for folks to become better educated.

Please **LISTEN to this podcast** on your computer or phone (both if you can), and **send us your feedback** ([prepare@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org](mailto:prepare@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)) and we'll pass it on to the developers at WUI-Go!. We're all very interested in your opinions and any suggestions for improvement, thanks!

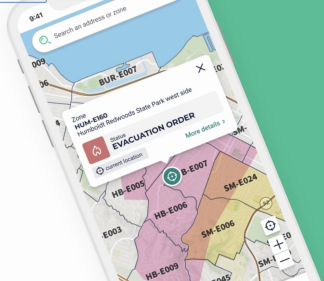
## GENASYS APP UPDATE



### Download our Mobile App

With the Genasys Protect mobile app, follow a zone or turn on your location to get notified about danger wherever you are

Click below to download



Genasys Protect app version 2.3 brings a refreshed look and feel to the app, with enhancements designed to improve accessibility and simplify how you view critical emergency information – all while keeping the layout you're familiar with.

From faster access to alerts, to a cleaner, more intuitive interface – version 2.3 gives you even more tools to stay informed and safe. Check out the **video overview** for a quick walkthrough of what's new!

DO YOU KNOW YOUR ZONE?



## MORE OF NOTE

- **Alameda County Grand Jury Report** – "Oakland's Wildfire Preparedness: Good Vegetation Management But **Emergency Access Needs Improvement**" OFSC hopes that this will prompt increased focus on evacuation! [Read report](#) (starts on page 62)
- **East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWC) reports that** "new legislation signed by Governor Newsom exempts local governments from needing to prepare CEQA documents for certain wildfire prevention vegetation management programs" [See PDF](#)
- **United Policyholder (UP) Tip of the Month (July)** – "Summer is Here ~ **Less Is More**. If you live in a suburb or rural area, as you refuel the BBQ and dust off outdoor furniture, take a moment to look around your home and yard. What is in that first five feet around and right up against your home? What if an insurance company, firefighter or local official told you need to completely clear it? Every single plant or object. Yikes, right? For those of us focused on reducing wildfire risk and restoring insurance options – the 5 feet around your home is a very hot topic..." [Continue](#)
- **The East Bay Regional Park District** is investing \$10.9 million over three years to reduce wildfire risk across more than 600 acres in Anthony Chabot, Tilden, and Wildcat Canyon Regional Parks, Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve, and Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline—removing hazardous vegetation and dead and dying trees, including eucalyptus [More info](#)
- **CA Fire Safe Council Fire Safe Vendor List** – This free resource is designed to connect Californians with reputable businesses providing products and services that help you live more safely with wildfire. [More info](#)
- **CPNS Naturehood Webinar** – "**Basics of a Fire-Safe Yard**" In California's fire-prone landscapes, thoughtful planning can reduce risk while supporting biodiversity and creating a beautiful garden. [View recording](#)

## 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](mailto:outreach@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)



- The next OFSC meeting is Wednesday, August 20th



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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