

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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OFSC OUT IN THE COMMUNITY



Spring is here, and that means it's officially tabling season!



The **Alameda County D5 Emergency Preparedness Fair** on May 2 was a huge success! Overall, there was a great turnout (even on a foggy day) and a lot of interest within the community on how to be better prepared for emergencies.

The event was held at the Emeryville Center for Community Life and consisted of workshops by Alameda County Fire Department along with a resource fair with over 15 participating organizations including the Red Cross, PGE, BAAQMD, Alameda County OES, United Policyholders, WUI-go, UC Berkeley Seismology group, Center of Independent Living, CORE, Genoak and Firesafe Councils from Berkeley and Oakland.

OFSC helped to recruit tablers for the event and it was great to connect with so many organizations working to support local resilience.

Team OFSC was there in force and we interacted with over 100 community members, sharing our emergency preparedness resources and checklists, promoting sign-ups for alerts, discussing Firewise and highlighting our educational and vegetation management programs.

A special thank you to Alameda County Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas and her staff for promoting and hosting this important event for our community.



In April we joined the **Montclair Farmers Market Art Walk** to connect with neighbors of all ages and shared emergency preparedness resources. Board Member and volunteer Maryanne Hubbard, joined by her daughter Mackenzie, shared materials and talked with neighbors about simple steps to stay safe.



Emergency Preparedness Tip: Do you know your evacuation zone? **download the Genasys Protect app** or visit **online** to save important locations like your home, schools, and workplaces to stay up-to-date with evacuation alerts.



Many thanks to our volunteers 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! Get in touch: info@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org

JOIN US ONLINE – OFSC MAY MEETING



OFSC MEETING (ONLINE)

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

7:00–8:30pm

REGISTER

May's special presentation – Oakland's Fire Marshal Darin White will present on this year's vegetation management and property inspection plans, and cover other recommended wildfire preparedness actions. Meeting **AGENDA**

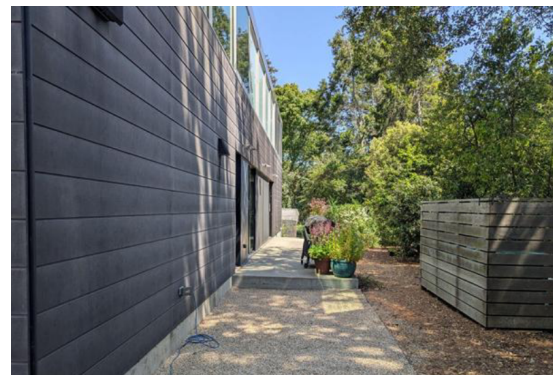
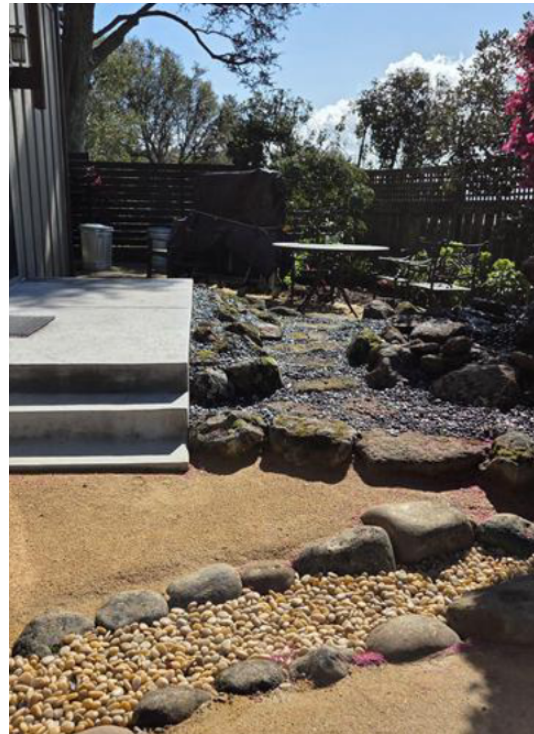
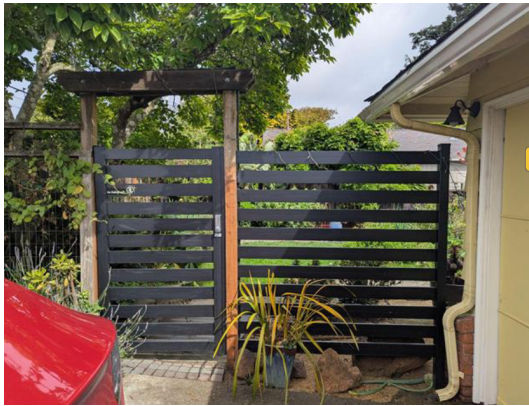
We welcome everyone from all Oakland and East Bay communities to observe, participate, and/or get involved.

FOLLOW-UP TO OUR APRIL MEETING

Berkeley Firewise leader Michel Thouati shared lessons from Berkeley's rollout of Zone 0, EMBER, wildfire safety requirements. He discussed the challenges

of implementing new defensible space standards, the importance of community education and Firewise groups, and the growing neighborhood effort to reduce wildfire risk through home hardening and vegetation management.

Take a look at some of the work they've been doing to harden their homes!



AND SPEAKING OF ZONE 0...

The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Zone Zero Committee met on April 23 to review updated draft regulations for wildfire safety within the first five feet around homes.



Proposed changes include:

- Defining separate non-combustible and low-combustible zones
- Restrictions on new combustible fences and gates
- Flexibility for local fire agencies to approve alternative practices.

The draft regulations continue to generate significant debate among firefighters, Firewise communities, scientists, and residents. If approved this summer, the rules could take effect as early as July 7 for new construction, with phased compliance timelines for existing homes.



To learn more about the proposed changes and see how to submit your comment to the Board of Forestry, [read the full article](#) on the OFSC website

FIREWISE HAPPENINGS

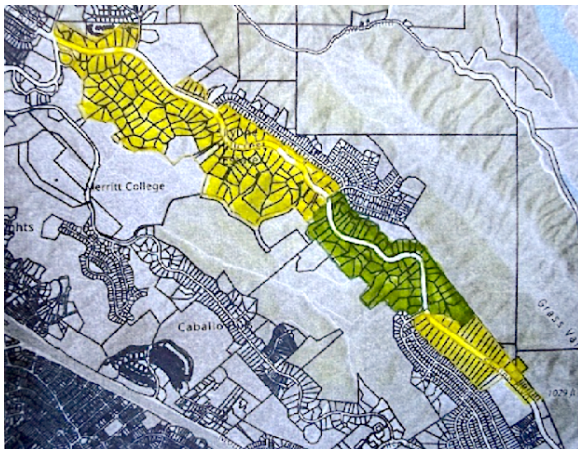


ESTATES FOUNTAIN FIREWISE EVACUATION DRILL

On April 11, neighbors in the [Estates Fountain Firewise Community](#) gathered for an evacuation drill focused on practicing emergency readiness, evacuation routes, communication tools, and neighbor support. Despite the rain, community members came together to share lessons learned, compare go-bag essentials, and strengthen preparedness efforts for the future. Special thanks to Leslie Louie and Tommy Hayes for sharing their experience organizing the drill.

[Check out the full story](#) on our website to learn more about the drill, emergency resources, and key takeaways from participants.

SKYLINE FIREWISE COMMUNITY EXPANDING ITS BOUNDARIES



For the past three years, 65 homes along Skyline Boulevard, between Parkridge Drive and Hansom Drive, have benefited from being a Firewise USA® recognized community within the Hillcrest Estates Improvement Association (HEIA). These benefits include access to home hardening resources, potential insurance discounts, and a stronger, more resilient neighborhood.

Now, the HEIA is petitioning its residents to expand the [Skyline Boulevard Firewise Community](#) to include the full stretch of Skyline Boulevard from Redwood Road south to Keller Avenue. This expansion would extend these valuable benefits to an additional 200 homes, while strengthening their collective defense against wildfire risk.

If you are an HEIA homeowner within the proposed expansion and are interested in becoming Firewise recognized, please [email Tonia Hsieh](#) for the participation survey.



Is your community interested in becoming a Firewise USA® recognized site? See how OFSC can help your neighborhood group with the process – visit our program page [Firewise USA® for Oakland](#)

FROM THE CITY OF OAKLAND

WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH



May is Wildfire Awareness Month, and the Oakland CORE program will be sharing tips on social media to help Oaklanders prepare for and prevent wildfires. Topics include:

-  Oakland's wildfire history
-  Defensible space
-  Home hardening
-  Fire prevention
-  Go bags and making a plan
-  Evacuations and staying informed

Whether you've lived in Oakland for decades or just moved to the area, follow [@readyoakland](#) AND be sure to follow OFSC – [@oaklandfiresafe](#)!

YOUR FEEDBACK REQUESTED

The City of Oakland is asking for feedback on its new wildfire-related webpages:

- [Defensible Space](#)
- [Home Hardening](#)

Email your feedback to Oakland Climatefellow Leslie Wasserman [here](#).

SIRENS FALSE ALARM

On Friday, April 10th at 1:24 pm, all 27 of Oakland's Emergency Sirens were activated, sounding throughout the City.

About 45 minutes later, an AC Alert confirmed there was NO EMERGENCY in the City of Oakland, and that the siren activation was accidental. Whew!

If you heard the siren(s) and looked for an AC Alert, tuned into a local AM/FM radio station, checked social media or even turned on your GENOAK 2-way radio – you did the right thing(s)! **Even though this was an accident, it was a good practice** of what to do in an actual emergency. The sirens are tested on the 1st Wednesday of



the month at noon – if you don't hear any sirens in Oakland, [please let us know](#). And here are two follow-up actions:



- [Sign up for AC Alert](#)
- Visit the City of Oakland [Stay Informed webpage](#) which includes information about emergency sirens

WILDFIRE PREVENTION COMMISSION

By Elizabeth Stage, OFSC Board Member and Wildfire Prevention Commissioner

The Wildfire Prevention Commission (WPC) met on April 16th and received reports from staff. The Zoom glitches in March were identified and fixed; the Vegetation Management Plan can now be found at the bottom of the [WPC webpage](#).

Kevin Charles, a horticulturalist and Acting Park Supervisor in Public Works, has started a 90-day rotation in the Measure MM position to coordinate expenditures and to increase attention to native plants when brush is being cleared. If a permanent appointment hasn't been completed by July, another temporary staff member will take his place. Mr. Charles is looking forward to working with community groups that steward the parks and has been communicating with Lin Barron, the convenor of the [Oakland Wildland Stewards](#) (OWLS).

Current information about MM expenditures to date was acknowledged as needing more detail; Chief Covington said that he would work with Public Works to get a revision ready by the end of the month. Subcommittees were formed for the report to the City Council and evacuation considerations; they will provide updates at the next meeting

The **next meeting** of the WPC is Thursday, May 21, 5–7 pm, in-person at City Hall and on Zoom. For more info refer to the [WPC webpage](#).

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.

BEACON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS EXERCISE

The 2026 [BEACON Emergency Communications Exercise](#) was held on Thursday, April 30th. Our BEACON 2-way radio communications ranged from local/Oakland to County to State-wide, with [GENOAK](#) and [ORCA](#) (Amateur/Ham) Net Control

operations stationed in Oakland's Emergency Operations Center radio room from 09:00 - 16:00.



Sam WRMJ85, pictured here, handled (with practiced ease) a number of simulated field reports from GENOAK operators around Oakland. Based on those reports, mutual aid and resource requests were sent to the Alameda County Sheriff's Communication Team via 2-way radio, who then responded back with simulated delivery statuses. **Thanks to all GENOAK operators who participated in the exercise!**

MORE OF NOTE

- **Vegetation Cleanup Event**
On April 11, Berkeley Firewise Alliance hosted a community cleanup to help reduce fire risk. See some great photos and read the [article](#).
- **United Policyholder's WRAP Working Group Meeting**
Next meeting, May 19, 1 pm – [Register](#). April 21 meeting [recording](#).
- **Wildfire webinar: Where to get best information during fire emergency**
Hosted by UC ANR Fire Network, May 21, 9 am – [Register](#)
- **East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWCG)**
Next meeting is May 27 – agenda and meeting materials are posted closer to that date on their [website](#).
- **Enter to Win an Air Purifier**
Wildfire Awareness Month Giveaway hosted by CA Fire Safe Council [enter](#).
- **How Is California Working to Prevent Severe Wildfires?**
May 14, 11 am-12 pm. [Virtual event](#) hosted by Public Policy Institute of California.
- **"CA Prepares for Early Wildfire Season Amidst Slashing of US Forest Service"** KQED Forum (4/20) [Article](#)

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 June 17



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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