

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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## MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! THANKING PG&E FOR A FUEL REDUCTION GRANT

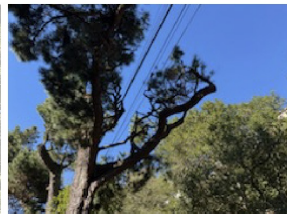
**Oakland Firesafe Council has been able to significantly enhance fire safety across the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in the Oakland Hills thanks to a grant from PG&E.**

In May of this year, OFSC was awarded a \$150,000 grant from PG&E to implement 11 fuel reduction projects across the Oakland Hills. These initiatives have been completed, marking a significant investment in wildfire mitigation efforts for the region.



We successfully facilitated and completed critical vegetation management and fire mitigation projects on twenty-three residential properties and three key City of Oakland properties. Funded by the PG&E Fuel Reduction Grant, these projects prioritized immediate wildfire hazard reduction through intensive fuel reduction, hazardous invasive species removal, and ecological restoration, concurrently fostering community resilience and stewardship.

Crews conducted targeted, high-impact fuel abatement efforts, directly reducing wildfire risk at each location.



**For a list of project activities, photos, homeowners reactions & more  
SEE THE WHOLE STORY**

## JOIN US ONLINE – WEDNESDAY EVENING 11/19



**OFSC MEETING (ONLINE)**  
**Wednesday, November 19, 2025**  
**7:00-8:30pm**  
**REGISTER**

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

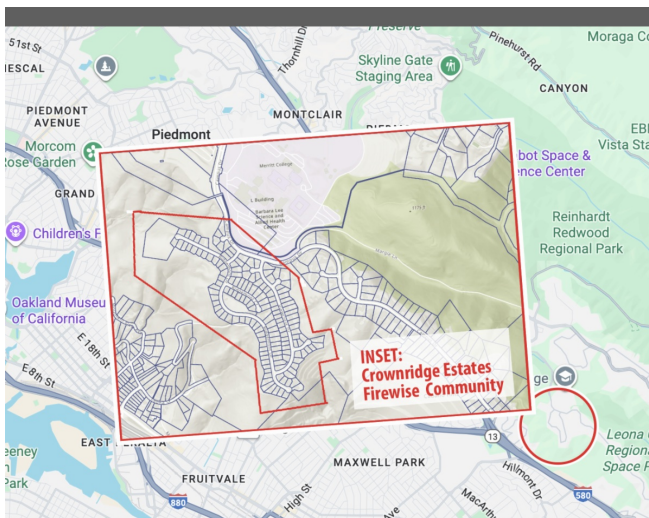
November's special guest: Jen Goodlin, Executive Director – Rebuild Paradise Foundation, will present about the organization and share some of the programs they've incorporated, their work with insurance, and incorporating home hardening into their community.



## FIREWISE ON THE RISE!

### CROWNRIDGE ESTATES FIREWISE COMMUNITY

Crownridge HOA is a community of 152 homes in the Oakland Hills, adjacent to Merritt College, and bordering Campus, View Crest, and Ridgemont Drives. Helen Bulwik, resident Firewise lead, shared:



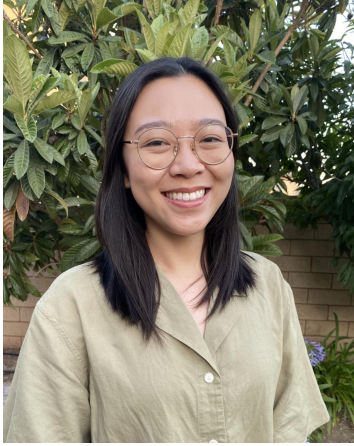
"As an HOA we already have relatively stringent landscaping, tree, and vegetation rules.

However, we learned quickly from the many homeowner insurance cancellations that we were experiencing that this was not enough..."

**READ THEIR STORY**

### PHD STUDENT ASKING FOR INPUT FROM FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

Hello! My name is Isabel Qi. I am an Oakland resident



and a PhD student at UC Berkeley studying Firewise communities and the homeowners insurance availability and affordability challenges. Having lived in wildfire-prone suburbs of the Bay Area and Southern California throughout my life, wildfire risk and insurance non-renewals are issues that are personal to me. I'd love to hear about your experiences with organizing Firewise communities, any challenges you are facing with insurance, or your interactions with insurance companies. Please reach out if you're willing to share. Thank you!  
Email: [iqi@berkeley.edu](mailto:iqi@berkeley.edu)



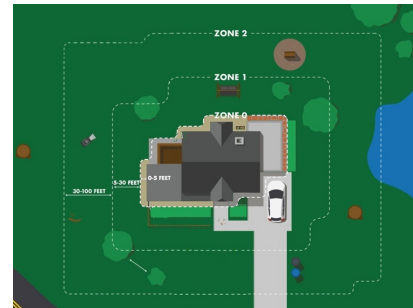
See how OFSC can help your neighborhood group with the NFPA Firewise USA® recognition process – visit our program page [FIREWISE USA® FOR OAKLAND](#)

## ATTENDING TO THE HOME IGNITION ZONE

### CALIFORNIA'S ZONE ZERO HEARINGS

#### Closing In on the Finish Line

The October 23 Zone 0 hearing at McClellan Park marked a turning point in California's effort to define the state's ember-resistant defensible space rules. Commissioners reviewed the near-final "October Plead," balancing science, enforceability, and public acceptance after months of debate.



[Read the full blog](#) by Michel Thouati, FireSafe-FireWise Alliance; Elizabeth Stage, Oakland Firesafe Council

NOTE: The more recent November 3rd meeting was very similar to the October 23rd meeting in substance. Despite a couple of important presentations, most of the discussions from the committee and remarks of the public were similar to, if not identical to, previous statements, as summarized by the above blog. No regulation proposal was made on 11/3 by the CA Dept of Forestry. It looks like the Zone 0 proposal will be delayed until early 2026. They will be writing up another draft for review in early December. There are some very deep differences of opinions on the allowance of vegetation and tree limbs within Zone 0.

### OAKLAND NEIGHBORS CREATE FIRE-SMART YARD

"At first, it was difficult to picture a landscape plan done differently than we're accustomed to seeing..."





Neighbors in the Woodminster neighborhood of Oakland (near Hwy 13 and Joaquin Miller Park) shared their experience:

"Regarding the project itself - The whole thing was delayed by a couple of years because we wanted to wait for our street to be repaved, and the city of Oakland kept pushing it back. That turned out to be a fortunate thing for us because during that time we learned about the Firewise guidelines and incorporated them into the hardscape plan.

We worked with a landscape designer to lay out the plan. At first, it was difficult to picture a landscape plan done differently than we're accustomed to seeing - with plants up against the front of the house. But our designer helped us create a plan that we feel is functional, looks good, and incorporates the zone zero principles

Once we got the plan in place, the execution happened pretty quickly- The crews were very efficient. We're very happy to have it done now, and are looking forward to seeing how the landscaping matures into place."

## OFSC OUT & ABOUT

### ALCO D3 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DAY

On October 18, Alameda County District 3 Supervisor Lena Tam hosted an emergency preparedness event in collaboration with the City of San Leandro, Alameda County Fire Department and the Office of Emergency Services. The event

focused on the importance of being ready for the next emergency and consisted of presentations, workshops, a resource fair as well as a free "Go Bag" for the first 300 participants.



OFSC President Elizabeth Stage started the day as keynote speaker (see photo) presenting on how to get prepared for emergencies through education, online information and getting to know your neighbors, police and local government representatives. Other members of the OFSC (Doug Mosher and Wendy Goldsby) participated in the resource fair and provided guidance on evacuation planning, signs up for emergency notifications, and emergency

preparedness workshops through OFSC. We also spoke with many participants on how to collaborate with others in your community to become Firewise recognized through the National Fire Protection Association.



There was an excellent turnout for this event with almost 100 people visiting our booth alone. Of significant interest were our educational materials, emergency radio program (GENOAK), best practices on preparation, and many good stories shared of emergency survival including one individual who experienced the earthquake in Mexico City.

We were in the best company of emergency response organizations such the Fire Department, Falck, Stanford medical, Office of Emergency Services, SPCA, United Policy Holders and our OFSC friends WUI-Go! who are mapping emergency routes and times to evacuate.

Read a bit more about the event in [Supervisor Lena Tam's October newsletter](#).



OFSC also got a shoutout in the recent newsletter from Alameda County Supervisor (D5) Nikki Fortunato Bas: "I also appreciate the Oakland Firesafe Council and Alameda County Fire Department for supporting the recent Emergency Preparedness Day in San Leandro with Sup. Lena Tam, which my staff attended. The OFSC presentation to the community was informative, engaging, and encouraged people to connect with their neighbors."

*Thank you, Supervisor – we appreciate you and the work you're doing with the East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments!*



Back in the beginning of October, the Evergreen Slater Neighborhood Annual Potluck was held on Evergreen Lane by Garber Park.

OFSC board member Christophe Marcant was in attendance and reports: "It was a lively and well-attended event, bringing together residents from the Evergreen-Slater area and nearby neighbors.



District 4 Councilmember Janani Ramachandran was present and addressed the crowd with a warm message of community engagement and local resilience. We also heard from Greg Call of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy, who emphasized the continued need for funding to support vegetation clearing in Garber Park.

I then spoke briefly to introduce the Oakland Firesafe Council, highlighting the scope of our work citywide and the importance of the Firewise USA program. I reminded attendees of the value of sustaining their participation in Firewise activities as a neighborhood effort.

For context, I conducted the "Introduction to Firewise" presentation back in April. The Evergreen-Slater group has since defined their boundaries, formed a steering committee, and is now ready to move forward with their community wildfire assessment.

It was a positive and community-building event, with good momentum toward strengthening their Firewise engagement."



OFSC volunteers are vital in helping make our communities better prepared for wildfire. Interested in joining us? Use our **CONTACT** form or email [info@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org](mailto:info@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org)

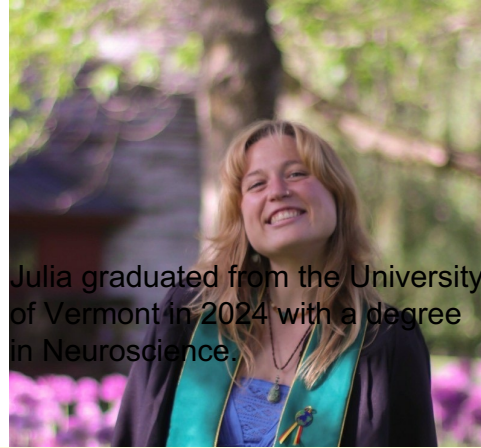
## FROM THE CITY OF OAKLAND

### MEET THE NEW WILDFIRE RESILIENCY FELLOWS

The Oakland Fire Department (OFD) Emergency Management Services Division (EMSD) is excited to announce that Julia Booth-Howe and Leslie Wasserman have joined them as California Climate Action Corps Fellows.



Leslie is a 2021 graduate of UC Berkeley, where she studied Environmental Studies, Public Policy, and Data Science.



Julia graduated from the University of Vermont in 2024 with a degree in Neuroscience.

Through August 2026, Julia and Leslie will partner with various local government and nonprofit organizations, such as Oakland Firesafe Council, to build wildfire resiliency within the City of Oakland. The focus of their work will be to support outreach and education around home hardening, defensible space, the Firewise USA program, and vegetation management.

Julia and Leslie are thrilled to join EMSD and contribute to community preparedness and wildfire resiliency efforts in Oakland! They can be reached at [LWasserman@oaklandca.gov](mailto:LWasserman@oaklandca.gov) and [JBooth-Howe@oaklandca.gov](mailto:JBooth-Howe@oaklandca.gov)

## FREE PERSONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CLASS



Are you #ReadyOakland? Sign up for a FREE Personal Emergency Preparedness (PEP) course

- Thursday, November 20
- 6:00-7:30 PM
- Laney College BEST Center, 9 - 10th Street, Oakland, CA, 94607

Learn about the local hazards in Oakland, understand how to prepare yourself and your household, and find out how to stay informed during an emergency. This course is open to all community members, not just Laney College students.

All registered and confirmed participants will receive a FREE starter “Go-Bag” at the end of the workshop.

Space is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. [Details & Registration](#)

## MORE OF NOTE

- Claremont Canyon Conservancy Annual Meeting – Sunday, November 16th from 4-6 PM at Claremont Resort & Club. Keynote speaker: Berkeley’s Assistant Fire Chief Colin Arnold will share how to make homes and neighborhoods more wildfire safe. Open to the public. [RSVP](#)

- "A New Paradigm for Protecting Homes from Disastrous Fires" article in *The New Yorker* makes a strong case that community-scale collaboration – not just individual defensible space – is the future of home protection. [Read](#)
- "California mastered earthquake safety. Will it do the same for wildfires?", *SF Chronicle*, Opinion//Open Forum Contribution [PDF](#)
- Cal Trans is conducting a study with regards to removing the Truck Ban on 580 (which would affect highway 13 as well). Of wildfire safety concern is that big rigs on 580 could cause more congestion on a major evacuation route. With this and other concerns in mind, the group "No Big Rigs on I-580" is advocating to maintain the truck ban [Learn More](#)

## 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)
- Was this newsletter forwarded to you? Join our mailing list: [SUBSCRIBE](#)
- The next OFSC meeting is TBD



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.*

Publication #160

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