

THE KEY TO A SAFER TOMORROW

FIREWISE BULLETIN

APRIL 2011

Page 2

Where to go for help

Page 3

Newsletter survey - please respond

Page 4

Don Gasser retires, Carol Rice joins!

CONTRACTING VEGETATION MANAGEMENT IN WILDFIRE COUNTRY

By Carol Rice,
Fire Management Consultant

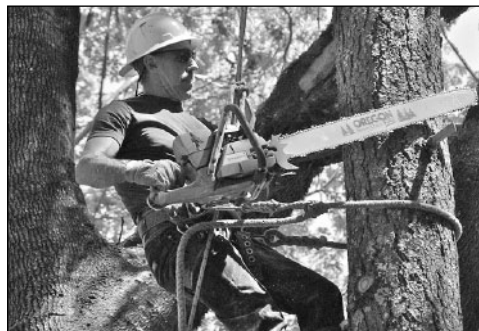
Many organizations offer brochures and booklets on complying with fire safety regulations. However, little guidance is offered regarding what steps are needed or whose services could be employed. This article offers tips regarding the process of guiding crews or selecting a contractor.

There are several types of professional services that assist in fuel management. Who you might call depends on the vegetation to be treated, slope steepness, and special concerns such as road access and egress for fire equipment and evacuation needs.

Weed abatement can be done by a crew of laborers or a fire hazard reduction company. Steep slopes or numerous obstacles (including rocks, shrubs and trees) require work be done with weed whackers, while gentle slopes are appropriate for ride-on mowers or tractors with flail or rotary mowing heads.

Field crews using hand tools or handheld power tools can prune and remove small shrubs and trees. But treating brush in steep canyons requires specialized techniques, equipment or livestock provided by a fire hazard reduction company.

The Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF) (www.napafirewise.org) maintains a list of firms that have demonstrated skills and knowledge in fire safety and defensible space requirements. (Please see the list of vendors provided in this newsletter.)



TOP: Mechanical masticator in action. MIDDLE: Goats doing vegetation management in Deer Park. BOTTOM: Musgrave from Family Tree Service

Work costing over \$500 for labor and materials requires that a tree trimming or landscaping license be on file with the Contractors State License Board (see www.cslb.gov or call 1-800-321-2752). To find a certified arborist, refer to www.isa-arbor.com or www.asca-consultants.org. All contractors should follow Cal-OSHA requirements and carry liability insurance and workers' compensation insurance. All workers need to have personal protection equipment such as helmets and goggles/masks, overalls, gloves and foot protection (e.g., heavy boots suitable for steep slopes).

Request the contractor provide certificates of insurance, and specify the scope of work, i.e., will they haul away the debris, or grind the stump down? If the project is costly, consider obtaining a performance bond to insure the work gets done according to specifications.

Motorized tools need to comply with Cal Fire regulations,

such as having spark arrestors; fuel tanks need to be filled in safe locations. Always have a fire extinguisher and shovel on hand. In the contract, prohibit using motorized tools on Red Flag Days, and have the contractor call the local fire agency if the weather is in doubt. Common sense says to work in the morning before conditions become dry and windy. Tree pruning and brush reduction should ideally be done in the late autumn/winter, BEFORE the next fire season.

Continued on page 4



WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

The job of defensible space development and maintenance can be daunting.

While Napa Firewise does not “certify” the defensible space contractors we use, we can offer you a list of contractors and companies who know and understand the requirements of vegetation management in wildfire country and the needs of defensible space in particular. If you have had success with other vendors not on this list and want to share them with us, please do. Send your recommendations to info@napafirewise.org.

Company: Of The Woods

Specialty: Arborist, Technical and non-tech tree care
Contact: Paul DuBois
Phone: 707-942-0818

Company: Firescape

Specialty: Weed whacking, brush clearing
Contact: Cary Gloeckner
Phone: 707-894-2008

Company: Joaquin's

Specialty: Weed whacking, brush clearing
Phone: 707-224-5827

Company: Golden Gate Landscaping

Specialty: Weed whacking, brush clearing
Phone: 707-246-3232

Company: Bill's Chipping

Specialty: Weed whacking, brush clearing
Phone: 707-998-4829

Company: Gregory Livestock Co.

Specialty: Mechanical masticator, ground crews, goats
Contact: Steve Gregory
Phone: 916-899-9130

Company: Gene Wixton

Specialty: Brush mowing and clearing
Contact: Gene Wixton
Phone: 707-354-0282

Company: Firestorm Wildland Fire Suppression

Specialty: Ground crews, non-tech tree felling, brush clearing
Contact: Matt Wilis
Phone: 530-228-6492

Company: Pacific Tree Care

Specialty: Arborist, technical and non-tech tree care
Contact: Jacob Schneider
Phone: 707-249-5028

Company: Bill Pramuk

Specialty: Arborist, tree consultant
Contact: Bill Pramuk
Phone: 707-226-2884

Company: Living Systems Land Management

Specialty: Goats
Contact: Jared Lewis
Phone: 831-239-6388

Company: Family Tree Service

Specialty: Technical and non-technical tree removal
Contact: Greg Musgrave
Phone: 707-984-6629

Company: California Reforestation, Inc.

Specialty: DS Crews and large projects
Contact: Chris Conrad
Phone: 209-588-1920

Company: Cut-Rite Tree Service

Specialty: Technical and non-technical + chip
Phone: 707-226-6404

Company: Gorilla Tree Service

Specialty: Technical and non-tech, crane, sawmill
Contact: Marshall Neil
Phone: 707-251-1669

Company: Hurst Firewood & Tree Service

Specialty: Tree and brush removal
Contact: Bruce Hurst
Phone: 707-554-3062

Company: Joe Branum Tree Care

Specialty: Arborist and DS consulting
Contact: Joe Branum
Phone: 707-942-8954

Company: Magic Tree Service

Specialty: Tree removal + restoration
Contact: Dudley Strasburg
Phone: 707-338-6178

Company: MD Tree Specialists

Specialty: Arborist and climber
Contact: Matt McClure
Phone: 707-259-0678

Company: Pacific Openspace

Specialty: Crews and equipment
Contact: David Kaplow
Phone: 707-769-1213

Company: Pope Valley Tree Co.

Specialty: Seedlings to removal
Contact: Heiko Gerdes
Phone: 707-965-0205

Company: P.T.S.

Specialty: Masticator + DS crews
Contact: Chris Dewett
Phone: 707-224-6543

Company: Rios Farming Co.

Specialty: Crews and equipment
Phone: 707-965-2587

Remember to check with your contractor to confirm they are fully licensed and insured.

WILDFIRE



We live in a clear and present danger of wildfire.

In the past 60 years of recorded fire history in Napa County, over 250,000 acres have burned from wildfire. It will happen again. It's just a matter of time and the right conditions.

Are you prepared? Do you have a survival plan? Where do you start?

Start with a visit to our website. There you will find information about our free vegetation chipping service, defensible space requirements, fire awareness workshops, help with community fire planning, and more.

We are the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation

www.napafirewise.org

Dear NCFE newsletter reader:

Effectively communicating in an era of instant media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr, YouTube and thousands of online blogs, is difficult at best. Selecting the best method to reach you is no small task.

With an eye to improving how we reach you with often critical safety information on wildfire preparedness, please take a few minutes to fill out this short survey and share your thoughts with us. Return the survey using the handy donations envelope provided in this newsletter. Feel free to support NCFE with a donation if you like. Your contact information will remain confidential. We promise!

[PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY]

My full name: _____

E-mail address to contact me: _____

Best phone number(s) to reach me: _____

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR CHOICE

I have access high speed Internet Yes No

I have access to a Smart Phone or iPad Yes No

I Tweet Yes No

I Text Yes No

I am a Facebook member: Yes No

I prefer the following method(s) to receive future NCFE Newsletters and safety updates:

PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

US Postal Service

E-mail with electronic version of printed newsletter

Other (specify):

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO FILL OUT THIS SURVEY.

Roger Archey, Editor



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT...

Continued from front page

Call a professional arborist or forester when there is a need to cut down a tree or remove large branches (over three inches in diameter), and for all work that requires standing on a ladder and holding heavy equipment, such as a chainsaw, above the head.

For contractors who apply herbicide, ask to see their copy of the State-issued pesticide applicator license. Ensure that the chemicals are used according to their label.

Livestock contractors provide grazing/browsing animals to reduce the volume of vegetation. Your agreement with the contractor should cover the supply of, use of and care for the animals, and should indicate that they are responsible for and will pay any costs necessary to ensure the health and safety of the animals, in order to comply with federal and state animal health requirements.

You and the livestock contractor should survey the site for poisonous plants to be isolated or removed, along with any protected species of plants to be guarded from grazing; ensure the contractor installs protection measures (e.g., additional fencing). If animals are being grazed in areas without weeds, you can ask to have the animals fed weed-free feed for 3 days in advance. The herder should have a cell phone for constant communication. Arrangements for housing and working conditions should be agreed upon prior to start of work.



Don Gasser

DON GASSER RETIRES

If you live in a remote area of Napa County, you may have come across a man wearing a shiny hardhat and reflective vest, and grimacing over a stand of juniper or eucalyptus on or near your property. That man was likely Don Gasser doing a fire fuels risk assessment of your neighborhood. Don has been an integral part of defensible space planning and wildfire awareness in Napa County for nearly seven years. From all of us at Napa Firewise, we wish Don the very best in his "retirement." He knows he can always return as a "Consultant Emeritus" to the program.

And thank you, Don, for passing the Firewise "torch" to Carol Rice, our new defensible space consultant.

CAROL RICE JOINS THE NAPA FIREWISE TEAM

Given the importance of professional fire planning and vegetation management to the Firewise program, Napa Firewise is pleased to announce Carol Rice has joined the team.



Carol Rice

A Bay Area native, Carol has consulted on fire management in the wildland-urban interface for over thirty years. She is a UC Berkeley alumna with a degree in wildland resource science and a Masters in fire science and management. Carol has written vegetation management plans and overseen their implementation for major landowners in every Bay Area county. Closer to home, she has consulted with the Silverado Napa Corp, Calistoga Ranch, and several individual landowners in Napa. Many of the best practices have been compiled into a reference book, *Managing Fire at the Urban Wildland Interface*, available at spbooks.com.

Welcome, Carol!



Napa Communités
Firewise Foundation
P.O. Box 4151
Napa, CA 94558

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CONTACT INFORMATION

FIREWISE HEADQUARTERS

Napa County Firewise
1199 Big Tree Road
St. Helena, CA 94574
707-967-1426

Email: info@napafirewise.org
Web: www.napafirewise.org

FIREWISE CHIPPING PROGRAM

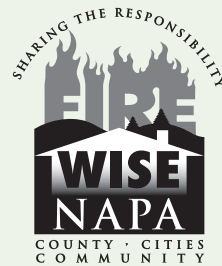
Hotline: 707-967-1426
Mail: P.O. Box 4151, Napa, CA 94558

NAPA FIREWISE BULLETIN EDITOR

Contact: Roger Archey
415.927.4207 or email at
rarchey@pacbell.net

LET US KEEP YOU INFORMED

If you would like to be added to the Firewise mailing list, please email Alicia Amaro at Alicia.Amaro@fire.ca.gov or call 707.967.1425. Be sure to leave your full contact information.



**Napa Firewise
Free Chipping**

Prepare for fire season now!
No limit on the amount we will chip!
For application information visit
www.napafirewise.org or contact
Alicia Amaro, Firewise Chipping Coordinator
at 707.967.1426
or Alicia.Amaro@fire.ca.gov

FIREWISE COMMUNITY UPDATES - NOVEMBER 2010 TO APRIL 2011



Atlas Peak roadside BEFORE vegetation clearing



Atlas Peak roadside AFTER vegetation clearing

ATLAS PEAK:

- The committee has had several productive meetings
- A committee has been formed and is collecting information for a community database to be used for Fire Safety bulletins & newsletters
- NCCF has funded & performed an \$11,500 initial mitigation project, removing brush & many Eucalyptus trees along Atlas Peak Road
- A telephone system is under development for emergency notifications
- The group is working on an application for a federal grant for 2012

BERRYESSA ESTATES:

- The community has an active telephone system for emergency notifications
- Two major projects were undertaken in Spring 2010, adding an additional 1 to 2 miles to their 100-foot wide perimeter fuel break
- Plans are underway to create a 3-4 acre community safe zone for evacuation needs
- The Fire Safe Council has applied for national "Firewise Community Certification"

BERRYESSA HIGHLANDS:

- The Community received a Home Ignition Zone Workshop
- A Fire Safe Council has been formed with 7 members
- A community assessment was done by Don Gasser

BERRYESSA HIGHLANDS cont:

- The committee has had three productive meetings
- A list of projects has been developed
- A prioritization of the projects has been accomplished
- Several demonstration-mitigation projects are underway

CIRCLE OAKS:

- In 2010 a major project – removing 24 diseased or dying Monterey Pines – was done
- The shaded fuel break around the entire community has been completed
- The community is working on an application for a federal grant for 2012

MT. VEEDER/DRY CREEK:

- Additional vegetation management projects are being developed for the Cove Girl Scout Camp, Old Ridge Road and Enchanted Hills
- A newly founded committee is working on an application for a federal grant for 2012
- The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is ready for final review and signature
- Work continues on the May 4 "Tee Up for Fire Safety" fundraiser golf tournament
- A portable information booth promoting MVFSC is being discussed for use at local events