



# Public Services

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## **Yakima County Commissioners Recognize Six New Firewise Communities in Yakima County**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, November 4, 2016**

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YAKIMA, WA - The Board of Yakima County Commissioners will present six new nationally recognized Firewise Communities in Yakima County at its regularly scheduled agenda on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, at 1:30 p.m. According to the National Fire Protection Association, Washington State is ranked number one in the nation for 2016 Firewise Communities, and Yakima County is ranked second in the State.

FIREWISE COMMUNITIES/USA RECOGNITION will include North Fork Tampico, Big Rock Road, Union Creek Cabin Tract, Sleepy Hollow Cabin Tract, Pine Cliffs Maintenance Company Inc., and Bear Cove Cabins. They will join Yakima County's first nationally-recognized Firewise Community—Chelminar Summer Homes—which attained national status in 2015, bringing Yakima County's total to seven model communities.

Firewise Communities/USA, co-sponsored by the USDA Forest Service, the U.S. Department of Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters, emphasizes that all members of a community play a role in wildfire preparedness. Efforts of community residents serve as a model for other communities in adapting to the risk of living with wildfire and taking the initiative to protect themselves and each other.

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### **FIREWISE COMMUNITIES/USA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **What is a Firewise Community?**

A Firewise Community is comprised of a group of homeowners or an association of residents who are working together collaboratively to take proactive steps to protect their homes and property against the destruction of wildfire.

#### **What are the benefits of a Firewise Community?**

Firewise promotes local solutions by assisting homeowners in taking individual responsibility, by teaching citizens how to adapt to the risk of living with wildfire, and by emphasizing the value of community members working together to take action to make their properties more resilient to wildfire.

## **What kinds of measures make a home Firewise?**

### *Construction and Property Maintenance may include:*

- Use of non-flammable roofing materials
- Fire-resistant siding
- Spark arresters on chimneys
- Double-pane or tempered glass windows
- Use of 1/8" metal screening
- Access for fire and emergency vehicles
- Storing flammables away from structures
- Installation of water supply for firefighting

### *Plants and Landscaping may include:*

- Use of fire-resistant plants
- Pruning any low-hanging tree branches
- Mowing lawns regularly
- Removing weeds and combustible vegetation
- Creating fuel breaks
- Storing firewood away from home

## **How does a community become a recognized Firewise Community/USA?**

- Create a Firewise Board to maintain and track progress
- Allow a WUI specialist to complete a cabin tract/community assessment
- Participate in a Firewise Communities/USA Day dedicated to Firewise projects
- Invest a minimum of \$2.00 per capita annually in local Firewise projects
- Submit a report to Firewise Communities/USA documenting achievements