



Get Ready, Stay Ready

*Nevada County Office of Emergency Services shares Ready, Set, Go!
Tips to prepare for wildfire season*

With California's snow pack well below normal levels, we are looking at a dangerous fire season here in Nevada County once again. It is crucial that everyone ensures they are part of the solution and knows how to get to safety if and when the next wildfire impacts our area.

The best place to start is *the Ready, Set, Go!* Handbook, hitting mailboxes across Nevada County in early May. It is a county specific guide that outlines the CAL FIRE and International Fire Protection Associations' preparedness strategy of "Ready, Set, Go!" and guides individuals through the necessary steps to prepare for the wildfire season. It could save your life and those of people you love. "With winter weather and rain, people take their minds off of wildfire, but now that we are into spring, we try to shift the community's focus back on wildfire preparedness. Right now we are in the 'Ready' phase and it is time to finish preparing ourselves and our properties" says Paul Cummings, Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) Program Manager. "We don't have a crystal ball to know what the 2021 Fire Season will look like, but we can look at the data. We have seen an increase in fire weather in Nevada County and across the state over the last five years. Of the state's 10 largest wildfires on record, five took place just last year."

Part of the Ready phase is staying aware of all the tools and resources available to make wildfire preparedness easier. "We know folks can get overwhelmed and we want to be sure they know we are here to help," adds Cummings. "One popular resource is our free green waste disposal and mulch pick up days. This year's schedule was shorter due to the pandemic but we hope to expand this program in the coming years."

Also available this year is a short film version of the Ready, Set, Go! Handbook created to assist OES in educating more people on the specific steps to wildfire preparedness. Residents are encouraged to watch, share, and discuss with loved ones as a companion to the detailed guide. It can be found on the county site and social media channels. It is now part of the multi-media toolkit that includes an interactive dashboard (readynevadacounty.org/dashboard) that



Jones Fire 2020

Photo by Elias Funez

proved invaluable to many during last year's fire season. Of course, ongoing personal community engagement is still provided by first responders and the Office of Emergency Services. "Sometimes folks really just need to talk things through neighbor to neighbor, friend to friend," said Cummings.

Are You Ready?

Right now we are in the Ready phase and the community threat is relatively low. This is the time when you finish creating defensible space and hardening your home against fire embers. "We are especially encouraging defensible space right now because fire danger is relatively low. Everyone should focus on doing what you need to do while you can run equipment like chainsaws and weed eaters with a lower risk of the equipment sparking a fire," Cummings explained.

There are several options for getting rid of the organic material once you have cleared your defen-

sible space, including putting it into a chipper, composting it, taking it to transfer station, and burning it. "Not all fire is bad, but safe burns require planning and skill," adds Cummings. Details on safe burning can be found in the guide and online at ReadyNevadaCounty.org. You can also do a residential curbside pickup from Waste Management or rent a large roll off dumpster as an individual or with neighbors.

Fire Safe Council of Nevada County provides information and assistance with chipping services, a list of licensed contractors who do defensible space, information about Firewise communities and free volunteer defensible space advisor visits, free residential homeowner green waste disposal and mulching events, and more. For more information, visit areyoufiresafe.com. (see sidebar for details on Free Green Waste Disposal and Mulch Pick Up Days)

Ready Check List

Use this list to check your "Ready" Status. If you are unsure, use your Ready, Set, Go! Handbook or visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org to learn more.

- Develop defensible space on your property and roadway
- Create a fire-resistant home
- Join a Firewise Community and organize your neighborhood
- Know the defensible space laws in your area

Look for future articles here to help you be "Set" and know how to "Go!"

Western Nevada County Free Residential Green Waste Disposal

May 21-24 & June 11-14, 2021
Friday–Monday | 7:00am-3:00pm,
12625 Brunswick Rd, Grass Valley, CA

Western Nevada County Free Mulch Pick Up

May 28-29 & June 18-19
Friday & Saturday | 8:00am-3:00pm,
12625 Brunswick Rd, Grass Valley, CA

Accepted items: residential green waste, biomass consisting of all tree and plant trimmings, weeds, leaves, branches, and items less than six inches in diameter.

Prohibited items: commercial green waste, Scotch broom, poison oak, blackberry, oleander, items with a diameter greater than six inches, tree stumps, root balls, treated wood, household waste, or trash. Safety measures will be implemented to mitigate the spread of coronavirus and participants should be prepared to comply with all guidelines. Additional details may be found at ReadyNevadaCounty.org/greenwaste.

FREE RESIDENTIAL GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL & MULCH PICK UP

For Nevada County Residents



Northern Sierra
Air Quality
Management District



READYNEVADACOUNTY.ORG/GREENWASTE