

**Unit 1, 2, 3 Fire Safety Committee Minutes July 29, 2023 at 1:00pm
Sheridan Firehouse**

Present: Lillian, Hoika, Andrea Mauldin-Garduno, Carol McComber, Barbara Nash, Rhonda Stokes, and 17 other neighbors attending the seminar.

Guest Speaker: Gabe Kohler, Program Manager, Fire Adapted NM and Guild Firefighter

Barbara Nash introduced Gabe Kohler and talked about his goals for fire prevention. He has worked with many homeowner associations (HOA). Free wood-chipping will be available in October.

Gabe spoke for an hour about how we can reflect the reality of preparing our homes before, during or after a wildfire. In New Mexico, the fire season is now a year round reality in many areas of the state requiring residents and firefighters to be on alert concerning wildfires. The reason we were at the meeting is we have mitigation at home hardening. Some insurance companies will not insure a home situated in a forested area or even country tall grasslands.

Some outlines for fire behavior are passive crown fires, which are lower branches removed from the surface of the ground to tree. The home ignition zone is outside of the home. A passive active crown fire is like a conveyor belt. So we are never done with fire prevention. We need to start with the structure of the home and all outbuildings such as garages and storage units.. Fire behavior is 89% homes are lost due to ember wash, which are also called "snow storm of embers." Snow storms can be little or big in nature. Mulch is no good around and near a home. Residents need to plan a five-foot area from home and deck of cleaning pines, pine needles, grasses and certain plants. Rock, flagstone or cement is good to use near the home, garage and outbuildings. Start with the home and work outwards.

Watch out for the propane tank. There should not be any wood nearby or trash or trees. Look for fine fuels such as pine needles underneath decks. Mesh helps around the bottom of the deck to keep out flying papers or bags, leaves, etc. If possible, put fire retardant on deck. Again, types of plants and spacing are important in 5-foot zone from the home. Research what plants are useful to prevent burning. Maintenance of landscaping includes removing branches and raking dead materials. Scrub Oak is extremely volatile. Invest in a brush saw to mow down Scrub Oak. Habitat for Humanity in Santa Fe rents brush cutters.

Bring up the canopy of trees and prevent radiant heat. For any rebuilding, use fire resistant materials. Upgrade rain gutters from plastic to metal. Keep the rain gutters clean of debris. Wood sidings on homes are not good. Pro-panel on roofs is usually better to use. Wooden eaves are dangerous. Make sure there is no vegetation around eaves. Vents should have 1/8 metal screening around them. Double paned windows are good. For fences, use metal flashing or cement blocks against the home and 5 feet from home. Fires burn uphill. Make the fireline more than 5 feet from and outbuildings. Remove all junk on property. Clumps of trees need to be spaced.

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NEXT MEETING: August 10, 2023 at 11:00am, 89 Roadrunner Road.