

DFSC Alameda County CWPP Homeowner Survey Summary Report 2/22/2012

(Completion rate: 100.0%) – 55 responses between 9/26/11 through 11/26/2011

How great a risk do you think wildfire poses to your community

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
No risk		2%	1
Low risk		7%	4
Moderate risk		37%	20
Extreme risk		52%	28
Do not know		2%	1
Total Responses			54

Check those factors you think add to your neighborhood's risk of wildfire

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Fuel load (vegetation)		67%	36
Buildings (construction, materials, location or design)		54%	29
Adjacent wildlands		61%	33
Steep topography		63%	34
Fire weather		91%	49
Inaccessible locations		46%	25
Single road access		57%	31
Limited fire protection		26%	14
Limited water for fire fighting		39%	21
Utilities (overhead electric wires)		37%	20
Human activities (potential ignition sources)		56%	30
Lack of community preparedness		30%	16
Other, please specify:		24%	13
Other, please specify:		9%	5
Total Responses			54


Check those factors you think add to your neighborhood's risk of wildfire (Other, please specify:)

#	Response
1.	narrow roads
2.	difficulty in disseminating warnings
3.	vehicles on narrow roads
4.	High turnover of residents since last fire
5.	New neighbors do not fully understand the threat--light candles outside, etc.
6.	Many contractors in area who are not careful, and who smoke.
7.	lack of designated escape routes
8.	no portable generators for pumping water out of water tanks
9.	smoking allowed in hill area
10.	quicker air support
11.	911 doesn't work in big fire
12.	camping of vagrants
13.	inadequate human resources








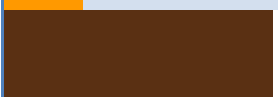





Check those factors you think add to your neighborhood's risk of wildfire (Other, please specify:)





#	Response
1.	density making defensible space difficult to achieve, i.e., buildings location I guess from chart above
2.	Liberals
3.	New neighbors who are not aware of danger.
4.	Tom Klatt / UC
5.	inadequate agency preparation

Do you think your neighborhood is currently prepared to deal with wildfire

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		37%	20
No		63%	34
Total Responses			54

In developing the Alameda County Community Wildfire Protection Plan we are exploring a variety of actions to reduce the risk of wildfire to neighborhoods in Alameda County. Which of the following recommendations do you think would be effective for your neighborhood?







Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Education to build awareness		61%	31
Collaborative projects to address wildfire along with other issues (such as creek restoration, crime prevention, native plant protection etc.)		45%	23
Ignition reduction programs (such as Smokey bear, school programs, general prevention information)		45%	23
Training of volunteers (such as CERT, Firewise or Volunteers in Prevention Programs)		43%	22
Inspections/ enforcement of defensible space by fire personnel		67%	34
Inspections/ education about defensible space by peers		31%	16
Engineered changes to equipment or potential ignition sites		24%	12
Monitoring of fire weather and issuing red flag warnings		78%	40
Fire patrols during high fire danger weather		69%	35
Closures and public use restrictions during high fire danger weather		53%	27
Restrictions on equipment or types of work during high fire danger weather		55%	28
Actions to reduce vegetation around homes (create defensible space)		59%	30
Actions to improve home resistance to ignition		61%	31
Actions to reduce vegetation in open space		47%	24

Hazardous tree removal		55%	28
Community-wide chipping and green waste pick-up programs		55%	28
Funding for neighborhood led projects		27%	14
Other, please specify:		14%	7
Total Responses			51

In developing the Alameda County Community Wildfire Protection Plan we are exploring a variety of actions to reduce the risk of wildfire to neighborhoods in Alameda County. Which of the following recommendations do you think would be effective for your neighborhood? (Other, please specify:)















#	Response
1.	greater setbacks for new homes
2.	parking restrictions; tougher penalties for those not complying with vegetation management
3.	automatic valves to shut off gas to large areas as a fire approaches. (This would be done by PG&E.)
4.	Need better warning information and more communication to the public during the disaster, fire or earthquake.
5.	communication withing the neighborhood when fires do occur on status
6.	Enforcing required fire prevention rules (such as vegetation too close to houses.
7.	The initial FEMA complete elimination of trees along areas Skyline Blvd was a disaster. We now have considerable erosion that is causing significant landslides. There was no plan for ANY replanting. The 2nd approach used in the remaining area of trees was to significantly clear the undergrowth and that has worked brilliantly. Also, probably the most important factor is good communication from citizens and fast response by the fire department.

Select the Alameda County Supervisorial District in which you live

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
District 1 - Scott Haggerty		2%	1
District 2 - Naia Lockyer		0%	0
District 3 - Wilma Chan		6%	3
District 4 - Nate Miley		9%	4
District 5 - Keith Carlson		11%	5
Do not know		72%	34
Total Responses			47

Select the Fire District or Fire Department that provides service to your home

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
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Alameda Fire Department		2%	1
Alameda County Fire Department		0%	0
Albany Fire Department		2%	1
Berkeley Fire Department		7%	4
CAL FIRE		0%	0
East Bay Regional Parks District Fire Department		0%	0
Emeryville Fire & Emergency Services		0%	0
Fremont Fire Department		0%	0
Hayward Fire Department		0%	0
Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department		0%	0
Oakland Fire Department		81%	44
Piedmont Fire Department		0%	0
Department of Army, Camp Parks		0%	0
Do not know		7%	4
Total Responses			54

If you do not know your District or Fire Department, write in the neighborhood & city in which you live

The 20 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

Response	Chart	Percentages	Count
Oakland		95%	19

Comments

The 24 response(s) to this question can be found in the appendix.

Response	Chart	Percentages	Count
more than thanks		16%	4

Appendix

If you do not know your District or Fire Department, write in the neighborhood & city in which you live |

#	Response
1.	Chjoctow near Humbery
2.	North Hills, oakland
3.	Montclair
4.	Oakland, Forestland, Conrad CT
5.	Hiller Highlands
6.	Montclair, Oakland
7.	Station 7
8.	Eucalyptus Path off of Alvarado, above the Claremont Hotel. Oakland
9.	Claremont, Oakland
10.	Tunnel Road near intersection with Buckingham in Oakland Hills -- around corner from where 1991 fire started.
11.	above Hiller Highlands (off Grizzly Peak over Caldecott Tunnel)
12.	Above the Claremont Hotel - Oakland with a Berkeley ailing address
13.	North Oakland / Upper Claremont
14.	Grand View Drive off of Hiller Avenue, Oakland
15.	Fire Station #7, Oakland Hills
16.	Oakland/Berkeley Hill - Claremont
17.	Alvarado hill above Hotel Claremont
18.	Skyline and Broadway Terrace, Oakland Hills
19.	Claremont Hills (Marlborough & Norfolk Rd)
20.	I live on Alvarado Road a block above Vicente at the top of a steep cul de sac abutting a hillside with a lot of dead vegetation. My mailing address is Berkeley but geographically the house is in Oakland.

Comments |

#	Response
1.	Thanks for the survey!
2.	After the experience of the fire in 1991, I think the question about whether one's community is prepared for wildfire is impossible to answer as "yes." I think we are more aware, somewhat better prepared than most, but the answer must always be "no." We are already, I should add, enjoying the benefits of some of the action kms I would recommend.

4.	Empty lots near our house are NOT cleared every year. Although the city may clean a few feet from the street, deep lots have years of accumulated debris. Owners should be forced to clear dead debris or city should hire to clean the entire lot and give bill to owners.
5.	I think one of the greatest hazards in my neighborhood is the number of vehicles parked in the street. The volume often makes it difficult for one narrow passenger car to pass, and would likely block emergency vehicles entirely. Should we need to evacuate in a hurry, this will be a huge issue and could lead to loss of life. As a start, I'd like to see Berkeley and Oakland work together to better control and restrict on-street parking. Lower Alvarado should perhaps be a one-way street as well, as this is perhaps the biggest bottleneck.
6.	Need to remove the eucalyptus and monterey pine trees
7.	Thanks for the opportunity to comment.
8.	Strict and timely inspection finding enforcement with a high enough \$\$ penalty that people comply.
9.	Reduction of fuel loads and better building and construction techniques will assist in slowing the spread of wildland fires within our urban environment.
10.	"Native plant protection" does nothing to reduce fire risk, and is an unnecessary diversion of funds. In Diablo wind conditions, ALL plants are fuel. UC's projects have increased fire risk by encouraging weeds, brush and low-hanging trees, as well as damaging the environment and habitat. "Hazardous tree removal" is code for eradicating eucalyptus, and I am opposed to that. "Hazardous" and "native" are subjective terms not based in fact and science. Read the Project Vesta report from Australia.
11.	Creek restoration and native plant protection have nothing to do with wildfire!!! or fire prevention!!
12.	Native plants have nothing to do with fire prevention. Native plants and trees burn just as easily (sometimes more easily) than non-natives.
13.	Too many diverse opinions with mixed information causing dissension and conflict to move forward. Too many new neighbors with no knowledge of fire danger. Realtors need to help inform with literature.
14.	Do NOT like clear-cutting of hillside forests
15.	We do not know how to get out of here in an emergency when the power lines are down and the fire trucks are coming the other way. Something needs to be done about parking along narrow streets.
16.	You have 3 gradients for perceived fire danger. This means Low, Medium (moderate) and what should be "High," but you have chosen the word "extreme" which means your survey results will be misleading and/or skewed.
17.	Residents can't fight a big fire, so we must depend on the fire dept -- responding quickly with the correct equipment and enough water !! Most important: prevent ignition, especially on Red Flag days. Agencies and homeowners should concentrate on maintenance: dry grass and brush, flammable stuff close to homes.
18.	Piedmont Pines and Panoramic are disasters waiting to happen.
19.	OFD screwed up in 1991, and the OPD was more a hindrance than a help. OFD has made

many changes for the better, but the OPD is still the same arrogant bunch. We need to get them on the same page, and oriented toward serving the community instead of their (early, profitable) retirements.

20. Inspections about defensible space by peers would never work. Residents get angry even about inspections by professionals.

21. I really wonder what is defensible space in an urban setting? 30 ft - the number I see bandied about - is preposterous. 30 ft from either side of my house puts me into the middle of each neighbor's house. Nobody wants to know their neighbors THAT well! For privacy as well as aesthetics, we need vegetation between houses.

On a different subject, those crews that come around and scrape the roadsides of vegetation every fall in the name of fuel reduction need better instruction and supervision. On the eastern end of Alvarado Rd. (94705) the crews carefully saved a few clumps of pampas grass for a few years, and now we have many, many clumps of this invasive and highly flammable weed.

22. Impose fines on people who do not obey notices of required fire protection measures given to them by the fire department

23. Making sure the vegetation along roadsides in the hills is important. A few years ago there were several small fires along Tunnel Rd and Skyline Blvd and I swear they were from drivers (contractors - I've seen them do it) flicking cigarettes out the window of their cars. The wholesale removal of trees along Skyline has dramatically changed the ecosystem here. Many species have moved from the area and there is considerable erosion of the hillside without the protection of a canopy. There was never any plan in place to re-plant the area and it is a mess.

Heavily clearing the undergrowth significantly improved the remaining treed areas. I will say that the areas owned by the City of Oakland and EBRP are usually the most guilty of NOT removing undergrowth (sometimes for years at a time). This year there was a significant effort along Skyline to cut back all growth close to and draping along the road. That was excellent.

I know funds are scarce. Getting communities involved with this would help everyone. Schools might be a good way to educate and to get children involved and by way of getting parents and communities involved.

Good luck

24. I recently sold my house on Alvarado Road in Berkeley. The house I live in is rented from the owner who has relocated for a few years to Texas. I am manager of the property in the owner's absence. There are five houses on this steep cul de sac, all built since the 1991 fire that destroyed the houses that were here originally. It's not clear to me who owns the hillside adjacent to this rental house and who is responsible for cleaning it up, but it is full of dead vegetation, dry wood and weeds. There are also eucalyptus trees on the slope directly opposite the house. I believe we are very vulnerable to fires here but don't know what government agency has jurisdiction over this property.