



What is Firewise?

An introduction to the Firewise USA® recognition program and NFPA

April 9, 2025 | Michele Steinberg | NFPA Wildfire Division Director



FIREWISE USA®

RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

A recognition program that provides a framework to help residents get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community.



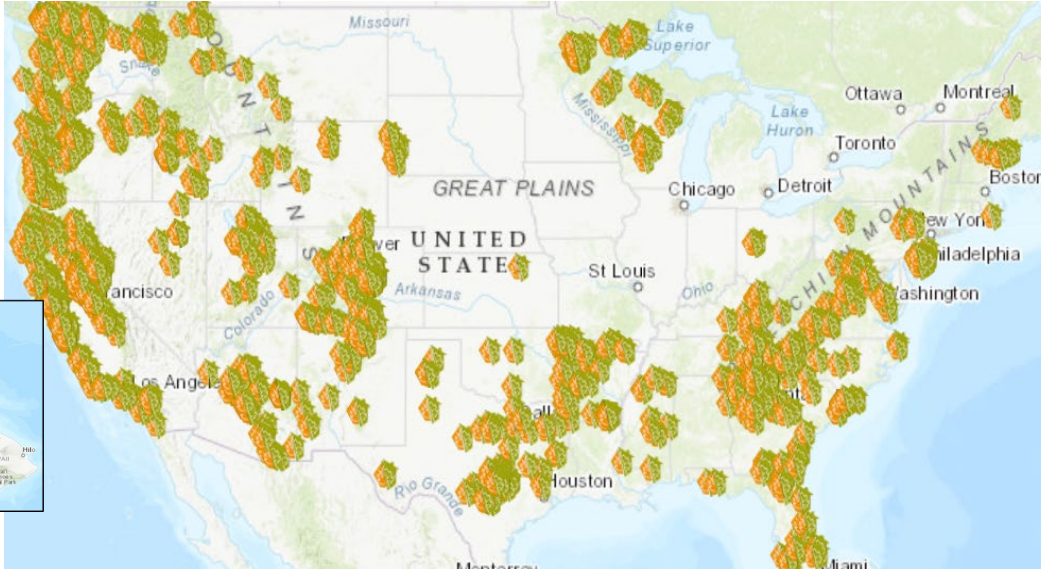
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FIREWISE USA®

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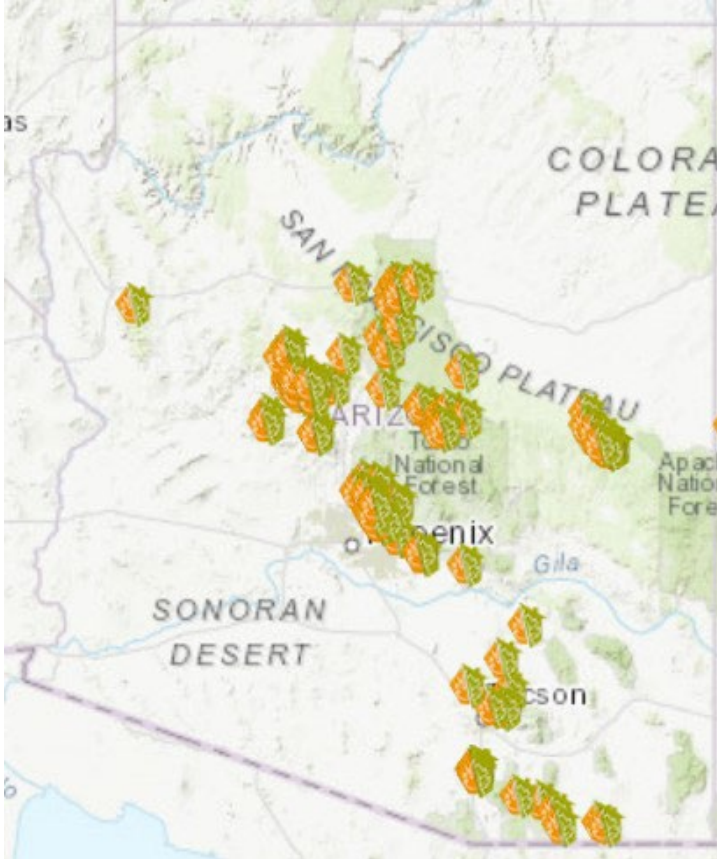
Fast Facts



- Voluntary community wildfire risk reduction program
- Established in 2002
- Available in all US states and territories
- Administered by NFPA with support from USDA Forest Service and State Forestry agencies
- Addresses risk of home destruction from wildfire
- Engages property owners in safety action



Arizona Participation



- 177 Firewise USA sites in good standing
 - 65,686 dwelling units
 - 130,874 people
- 10 of 15 counties have Firewise sites
 - Yavapai – 31%
 - Maricopa – 20%
 - Navajo – 20%
- Timber Ridge in Prescott among 2002 original sites

About the National Fire Protection Association

Global, self-funded non-profit devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.

- Support for development, adoption, and enforcement of codes and standards
- Research and data analysis
- Technical training and certification
- Public education
- Outreach and advocacy

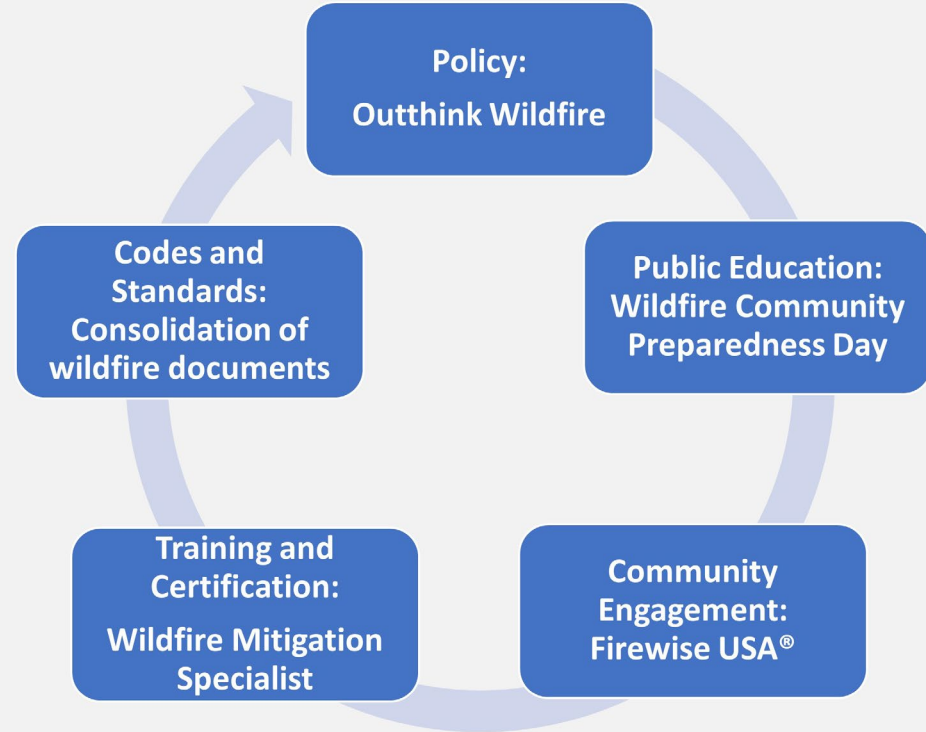
FAST FACTS

- Founded in 1896
- More than 40,000 members
- 6,000 volunteers
- 275+ technical code development committees
- 300 codes and standards
- 300 employees





NFPA Wildfire Safety Work





FIREWISE USA[®]

RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Why do communities participate in Firewise USA?

- Wildland fires can occur in areas of residential development without the occurrence of disastrous loss.
- A house and its surrounding community can be compatible with the area's ecosystem
- Encourages neighbors to work together to decrease risk for residents and first responders



www.Firewise.org



Why work with neighborhoods?

“Traditional wildfire [risk] models assume you're exposed to a wildland flame front. But in the WUI, the threat is often your neighbor's house catching fire. That's why:

- ✓ Individual mitigation is critical,
- ✓ But community-wide action is essential.”

– Nate Wittasek, P.E. - Vice President, Simon, Gumpertz & Heger

How communities can get started

1. Visit www.firewise.org and click on **Get Started**
2. Read the page and then click **Apply**
3. Fill out information on the **Firewise Portal**
 1. Organize a committee of residents
 2. Complete a wildfire risk assessment using NFPA's free tools
 3. Develop a 3-year action plan using NFPA's template
 4. Do an education event
 5. Document wildfire risk reduction work
 6. Submit final application

2025 Firewise USA Application

Canoa Ridge HOA

Step: 9 of 9

✔ Review



Details

- ✔ Overview
- ✔ State Requirements
- ✔ Risk Assessment
- ✔ Board/Committee
- ✔ Action Plan
- ✔ Educational Outreach
- ✔ Vegetation Removal
- ✔ Risk Reduction Investment
- ✔ **Review**



Firewise USA® recognition

- Community can request up to 2 signs
- Name of community appears on national website
- Public map is updated 3x annually



Steps to Maintaining National Recognition

To remain “In Good Standing,” Firewise sites must submit an annual renewal application. Due in mid-November, can be worked on throughout the year.

BE ORGANIZED

Committee oversees outreach and mitigation efforts

Verify risk assessment is current, update if prompted by the portal (every 5 years, due date shown on dashboard)

Update community details if expanding or shrinking boundary, submit a new map

REVIEW PLAN

Verify action plan is still current, update if prompted by the portal (every 3 years, due date shown on community dashboard)

DO THE WORK

Host a minimum of one wildfire risk reduction educational outreach event.

Meet the minimum wildfire risk reduction investment.

TELL US ABOUT IT

Login to the Firewise Portal to complete your renewal application and make community updates

Handy Links

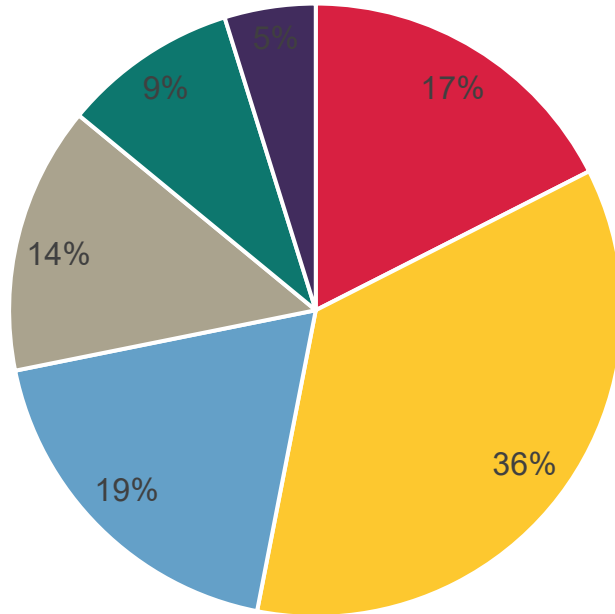
- www.nfpa.org/wildfire – all of NFPA’s wildfire resources
- www.firewise.org – overall Firewise website
- www.portal.Firewise.org – Application portal for recognition
- On www.nfpa.org or www.firewise.org use “SEARCH” for
 - **State Liaison** to find list of state contacts
 - **Firewise USA sites** to find list of recognized communities

Insurance and incentives

- USAA has been providing a discount for its members living in Firewise USA sites in 10 states, including Arizona since 2016
- NFPA licenses Firewise USA boundary information to data resellers that serve the insurance industry, primarily to address requirements from the California Department of Insurance

Firewise USA Retention Over the Years

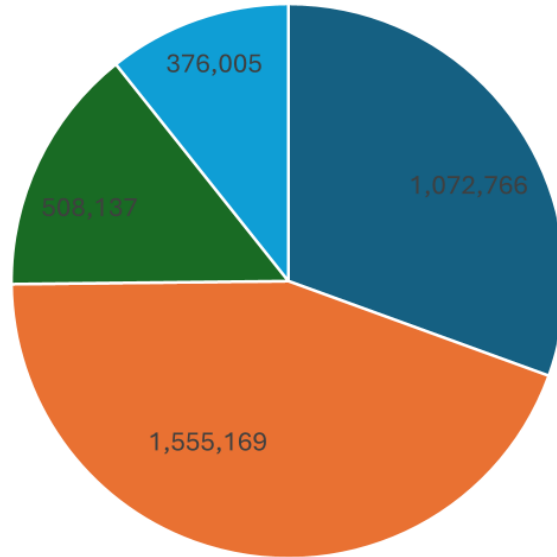
Participation Data as of January 2025



■ New in 2024 ■ 1-4 years ■ 5-9 years
■ 10-14 years ■ 15-20 years ■ 20+ years

- 14 percent of communities have been engaged for 15 or more years
- 33 percent have been engaged between 5 and 14 years
- 2023 to 2024 had a 99% retention rate

2024 Firewise USA Site Total Hours of Mitigation by Type



- ***75% of the reported hours represent work within the Home Ignition Zone***
- ***People devoted a total of 3,512,077 hours to wildfire risk reduction – average of 1,296 hours per site***

■ Dwelling Unit ■ 0-100 Feet Landscaping ■ Common Areas ■ Other

Thank You!

Michele Steinberg, Wildfire Division Director
National Fire Protection Association

msteinberg@nfpa.org



IT'S A BIG WORLD.
LET'S PROTECT IT TOGETHER.®