

# Common Findings Firewise Community Fire Hazard & Risk Assessments

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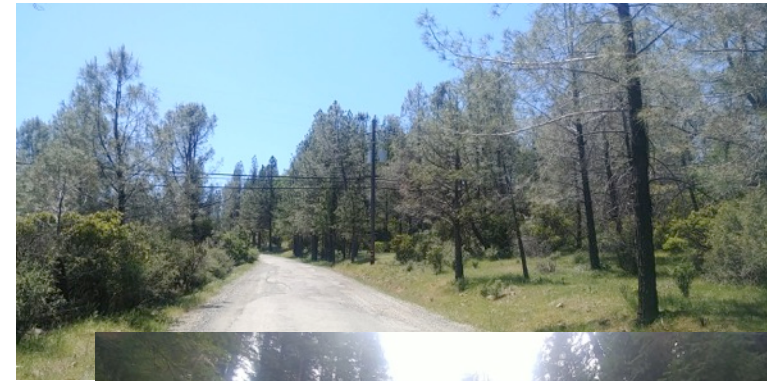


# Common Findings

- Evacuation Preparedness – roads, roads, roads
- Defensible Space – 0 to 5 feet, 30 to 100 feet, intensity of tree thinning
- Home hardening – older homes and some newer lack even basics
- Unrealistic and unsafe ideas of what can be a safe shelter in place
- Uninformed and often careless visitors

# Evacuation Preparedness

- ROADS, ROADS, ROADS
  - highest priority but **nearly all insufficient for safety**
  - Many roads & driveways with no clearing
  - Highways we all use have very insufficient clearing (49, 20)
- Other roads with limited clearing (10 feet)
  - This is **not enough to reduce potentially lethal heat**
- Surface & ladder fuel clearance but **too many trees**
  1. Can carry fire over road
  2. Higher risk of falling on road during evacuations
- **Insufficient pullouts** or too narrow
- **Lack of two or better three alternate ways in and out**
- Unsafe for evacuees and fire fighters or sheriffs, police, highway patrol
- **Waiting for county and others to do all work:**
  - Critical to take your own action on primary routes NOW



# Defensible Space

Purpose: **not just saving your home**

Homes are the highest, concentrated fuels around

- Less burning homes means less heat and safer evacuations, fire suppression, and fewer embers generated
- key to reduce intensity, heat and rapid spread during a fire

**0 to 5 feet** is where embers can cause most damage

- **98% of homes have flammable material in this zone**
  - All plants burn, even watered ones (they dry out in a fire)
  - Flammable mulch – very receptive to embers and generate more

Many have good 0-30 foot clearance but **not 30-100**

- Heat and flames from 30 to 100 feet can easily reach homes and firefighters there

**Too many trees**

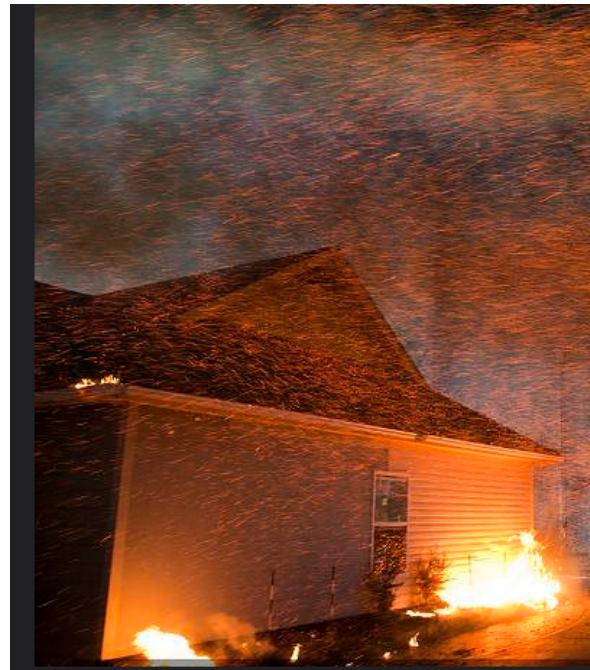
- **can carry crown fire from surrounding area, especially in high winds or fire generated winds**
- Ladder and surface fuel removal good but
- Crown separation does not meet PRC 4291 requirements, which is a MINIMUM



# Home Hardening

Many Older Homes - lack any hardening

- Two to three changes can help resist ember intrusion
- **Improved Vent Covers**
  - Upgrading to finer screen mesh and baffled metal covers
  - Use metal window screen!
- **Enclosing under decks or houses**
  - solid wood (i.e. plywood)
  - non-flammable material
    - Cement board
    - My favorite! Old metal pool siding or roofing
- Keep house free of litter on roof etc
- Get rid of wood fences attached to house
  - Use metal gates



# “Temporary Refuge Areas”

People think they have adequate areas – NOT UNDER ALL CONDITIONS

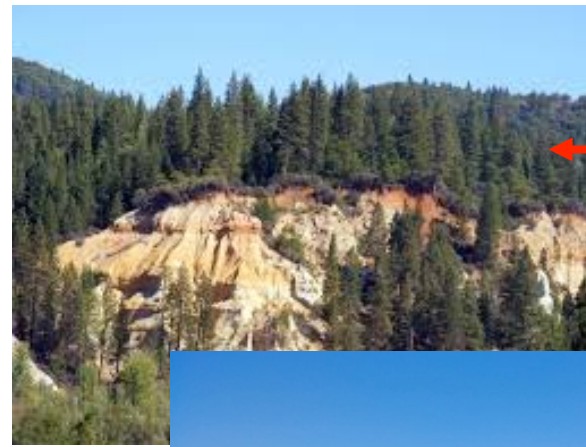
- Grassy, sometimes green field
- Metal building
- Mine diggings

**THEY CAN ONLY BE DETERMINED BY AN INCIDENT COMMANDER DURING A FIRE**

- May not be safe from deadly super-heated gasses or convective heat
- May not be big enough to hold many people
- Cars are flammable and if there are not planned areas to leave them out of refuge area, they can be a safety hazard
- Very few areas in county have the concentration of paved parking lots and fire resistant buildings that were used in the Camp Fire and it was dicey even then
- **Do not rely on them – I’m not....leave, leave, leave!**



Looks safe.... But  
Canyons funnel fire and  
Deadly super heated  
gasses, convective heat  
ahead of flames



Too much  
heat from  
trees



Are they big  
enough for  
everyone?



Only part of  
building is  
metal –  
flammable  
outside parts



Where will the cars go? flammable

# Uninformed and/or careless visitors

## Eastside – Truckee

- Majority of residences are second homes or rented out
  - Less involved or care less
  - Often know little about fire risks and evacuations

## High numbers of recreational or special event visitors

- Adds greatly to potential evacuees and don't know about fire
- Illegal campfires and best fire prevention practices
  - i.e. Town of Washington – 235 to 2,000 people in summer!

## Homeless not by choice or by choice

- Trimigrants and others at Purdon Crossing
- More examples you know of
- Don't know about fire risks or don't care or have a hard living situation
- Illegal fire starts, especially during fire season

