



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Wildfire Activity Highlights Need for Homeowners to Address Risk

**FORT COLLINS, Colo. – April 19, 2018** – With wildfires burning homes and causing evacuations throughout Colorado this week – in addition to statewide snowpack levels being below normal, with much of southern Colorado under extreme drought conditions – the Colorado State Forest Service wants to remind homeowners living in the wildland-urban interface to prepare for wildfires before they arrive.

While there is no guarantee firefighters will be able to save a home from a wildfire, the odds increase if homeowners and communities take proactive steps to reduce their fire risk, says Lisa Mason, CSFS forestry education specialist.

"Fire risk reduction efforts are much more effective when neighbors work together to reduce hazardous fuels around their homes and throughout the community," Mason said.

The CSFS offers numerous resources to help private landowners reduce wildfire risk, with specific recommendations including:

- Remove all flammable vegetation within at least 15 feet of any part of a home or other structure, including decks.
- Reduce the density of standing trees within 100-200 feet of all structures.
- Ensure adequate access for fire and emergency equipment and be sure that the house number is posted and easily visible to emergency responders.
- Keep grasses and weeds surrounding the home mowed to a height of less than six inches, through regular and ongoing maintenance.
- Regularly clear pine needles and leaves from gutters and decks, and trim overhanging branches.
- Stack firewood and locate propane tanks at least 30 feet from and uphill of structures.
- Have an evacuation plan and a designated meeting place that all family members are familiar with.
- Prepare a "grab and go" disaster kit with necessary family/pet items including important documents/photos, clothing, medications, food/water, phone charger, etc. so you are ready for immediate departure.
- Contact your county sheriff's office and ensure that your telephone number appears in the Reverse 911 or other emergency notification database.

"Remember that addressing wildfire risk is not a one-time effort, and that flammable vegetation grows back over time," Mason said.

For more information and resources on protecting homes and communities from wildfire, including how to become a Firewise Community, visit [csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation](https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation) or call a local CSFS field office.

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*The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) provides professional forestry assistance, wildfire mitigation expertise and outreach and education to help landowners and communities achieve their forest management goals. The CSFS is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University and provides staffing for the Division of Forestry within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. For more information, visit [csfs.colostate.edu](http://csfs.colostate.edu).*