



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

SAN BERNARDINO – In its ongoing effort to mitigate the destructive effects of wildland fires, The San Bernardino County Fire Department is offering to its residents a no-cost evaluation of their property's defensible space.

On May 1st, County Fire will be launching its *Residential Assessment Program* (RAP) promoting hazard reduction around homes that exist in our mountain, wildland, and watershed communities. This outreach program is mutually beneficial in that it assists homeowners while increasing both the effectiveness of fire suppression efforts and firefighter safety.

When wildfires threaten residential communities, there are many steps homeowners can take well in advance that help to reduce the chance of catastrophic loss. One of the best ways to prepare is by creating defensible space. Defensible space is the removal and/or trimming of fuels around the property that allow wildfires to burn up to and consume homes. Some steps to creating this space include clearing all dead vegetation, cutting limbs from trees that are between ground level and six feet in height as well as limbs that overhang roofs, and moving wood piles and other combustibles away from the sides of structures. This perimeter should extend 100 feet from the house or to the property line.

In the coming weeks, San Bernardino County Fire Department will be out in the community going door-to-door handing out information and, should any resident desire, offering to walk the properties with the homeowners. During these visits, firefighters will provide specific advice on how best to create defensible space for your house. These visits are free of charge and without penalty. Firefighters will be unable to provide physical labor, however information on various programs will be available.

To schedule an assessment of your home's property, you may contact our Office of the Fire Marshall at 909-386-8400.

For more information on how you can best prepare yourself for wildland fires and other safety topics, please visit www.sbcfire.org and click on Safety Preparedness.

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