



The National Wildfire Suppression Association (NWSA), comprised of the finest private professional wildland firefighting resources, dispatches those resources to emergency situations when needed. However, NWSA, along with its members, perform all kinds of preventative services to avoid crisis and catastrophe altogether. These preventative measures can have a positive effect on the wildfire season.

NWSA

PRESCRIBED FIRE

A prescribed fire, also known as a controlled burn, is a planned fire. We perform these fires to meet management objectives that ensure the safety of the public and fire staff, under proper weather conditions, to alleviate the possibility of a wildfire.

Prescribed fire is one of the most important tools used to manage fire today. Fire prepared in advance, under a scientific prescription of objectives – fuels, size, the precise environmental conditions under which it will burn – can create an optimal ecosystem for plants, animals, endangered species recovery, or reduce fuels that prevent destructive fires. Also prescribed fire is often the most cost-effective way to maintain areas of concern.



- **PRESCRIBED FIRE**

- Fuel reduction projects and vegetation treatments have proven to reduce wildfire hazards. A chance to skip a catastrophic fire improves public and firefighter safety, and also saves property, wildlife and money.

The object of hazardous fuel reduction is to remove enough vegetation (fuel) so that if a wildfire breaks out, it has a less severe impact and can be managed more efficiently.

When vegetation grows, it allows fires to burn hotter, faster, and with higher flames. Brush and small trees create a ladder effect that causes fire to move from the ground to treetops rapidly.

Removing or reducing these ladder fuels includes thinning of dense tree stands, removing underbrush and limbing trees using crews or machines. The material left from performing these duties is ground into chips or piled to burn during the winter months.

PRIVATE LANDOWNER FIRE PROTECTION

As the frequency of wildfires increases throughout Oregon and the United States, there is a significant need to reduce hazardous fuels on privately owned property. A fire does not respect property boundaries and will cross lines without reason. Because of this, landowners need to reduce hazardous fuels on their property to lessen the risk of catastrophe for them and others.

Common treatments to reduce hazardous fuels include burning fuel piles, letting livestock graze, thinning and pruning trees, clearing brush and creating firebreaks.

FIRE MITIGATION AROUND HOMES

When the population lives near forest or wildland areas, there is a real danger of wildfire. As we have seen here in Oregon and around the country, wildfires can destroy thousands of homes leaving occupants devastated. Fire mitigation around homes is imperative near these areas. To protect houses and reduce the risk of wildfire, these preventative measures need to take place:

- Know the history of wildland fires in near homes.
- Thin and maintain vegetation around houses.
- Create a 30-foot safety area around houses, keeping vegetation in this area minimal.
- Remove vines from siding.
- Prune shrubs regularly.
- Trim limbs on trees within 15 feet of the ground.
- Cut the lawn often.
- Clear the area of leaves, brush, fallen trees and limbs.
- Create a second zone 100 feet around the house – replacing all flammable vegetation.
- Make sure all combustible materials are away from the home.
- Avoid or replace flammable roofing materials.
- Cover stovepipes and chimneys with spark arrestors.
- Use fire resistant house siding.
- Always be ready for an emergency evacuation.

NWSA and our members can help assess and make changes in the area of fire mitigation around private homes and residential buildings.



FIRE RECOVERY

Wildfire recovery takes a steady course of assessing damage, evaluating new conditions, and deciding what to do after a wildfire has occurred. The ultimate goal is renewal, rehabilitation, and re-vegetation. This takes patience and persistence to attain.

Processes need to be in place after a wildfire to help minimize erosion, retain forest structure, reduce potential for another burn, and assure re-generation of vegetation. Active management can meet these goals.



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HOME PROTECTION WITH INSURANCE COMPANIES

Some of our NWSA Members work with insurance companies to provide preventative action when a wildfire potential exists. That could include removing hazardous fuels from the area around a home, using a heat-absorbing fire gel, and setting up perimeter sprinklers as preventative measure to protect a homeowner's property.

CONCLUSION

Our industry has performed the above functions since the 1970s in some cases and are well equipped to meet the growing needs of wildfire prevention. Also, the Wildland Firefighting companies provide jobs to rural areas that are most impacted by wildfire.



NWSA

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