

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
AGENDA ITEM
SUMMARY REPORT**

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date Held Until
__/__/__ __/__/__
Agenda Item No: Agenda Item No:
_____ _____

Department: **Emergency Services**

() 4/5 Vote Required

Contact: Phone: Board Date:
Mark Aston (707) 565-1152 05/05/09

Deadline for Board Action:

AGENDA SHORT TITLE:

WILDFIRE AWARENESS WEEK

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Resolution proclaiming the week of May 03 - 09, 2009 as
Wildfire Awareness Week in Sonoma County

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	N/A		<u>ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL</u>
Estimated Cost	\$		Contingencies \$
			(Fund Name:)
Amount Budgeted	\$		Unanticipated Revenue \$
			(Source:)
Other Avail Approp	\$		Other Transfer(s) \$
(Explain Below)			(Source:)
Additional Requested:	\$		Add'l Funds Requested: \$
Explanation (if required):			

Prior Board Action(s): Similar resolutions have been adopted by the Board each year.

Alternatives - Results of Non-Approval: N/A

Background:

Wildfire Awareness Week is a state recognized public information program to make residents aware of the beginning of fire season (May – October) and to take steps to lessen fire threats to their homes. Counties throughout California are continuously fighting wildfires during fire season; Sonoma County has experienced a number of serious wildfires in the past that destroyed homes and threatened the lives of citizens and firefighters. The theme of this year’s Wildfire Awareness Week is “You Provide the Defense, We’ll Provide the Offence. 100 Feet of Defensible Space Is the Homeowner’s Responsibility.”

Wildfire education programs and projects are offered in a mutual effort by Fire Safe Sonoma, the Department of Emergency Services, CAL FIRE and many Sonoma County fire agencies. The combined agencies are working hard to prepare for the start of the wildfire season and to inform residents about what they can do to protect their properties, especially information about how to create defensible space around homes and improve the capacity of structures to withstand wildfire. A few tips and reminders to help make homes fire safe:

- Remove all flammable vegetation 30 feet from all structures.
- In an additional 70 feet, create a reduced fuel zone by spacing trees and plants from each other.
- Clear all needles and leaves from roofs, eaves and rain gutters.
- Trim branches 6 feet from the ground.
- Remove branches 10 feet from all chimneys.
- Landscape with fire resistant plants.
- Use trimming, mowing and power equipment before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
- Address structural issues that make homes vulnerable to ember ignition during wildfires.

This year, Fire Safe Sonoma has several exciting projects underway:

- Sudden Oak Death Fuels Mitigation and the Defensible Space Project is helping residents within SOD impacted areas to clear fire fuels from around their homes and access.
- Funds received from the Bureau of Land Management will help support a county-wide chipper program for 2009-2010.
- A grant from the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District allowed Fire Safe Sonoma to purchase a chipper for use throughout the county. The chipper is available on loan to agencies who wish to use it to increase wildfire safety for their areas, and has been widely used and appreciated.
- The Sonoma County Master Gardeners, in conjunction with CAL FIRE and Fire Safe Sonoma have completed a fire safe demonstration garden at the Healdsburg CAL FIRE station on Lytton Springs Road. We are officially opening the garden to the public this week.
- A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the County is nearing completion, and is currently out for final review with the Sonoma County Fire Chiefs. The purpose of the CWPP is to delineate wildfire risks in the WUI and to identify and prioritize potential solutions so that when funding is sought to address issues, there is a comprehensive over-all plan from which to start. The completed CWPP shall be ready to present to the Board for approval by the end of June.

The efforts of all fire agencies and the public are needed to keep the County fire safe. The Director recommends proclaiming the week of May 03 - 09, 2009 as Wildfire Awareness Week.

Attachments: Resolution proclaiming the Week of May 03 - 09, 2009 as Wildfire Awareness Week.

On File With Clerk:

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote: