

Pioneertown Area Firewise Community



September 2025

The Pioneertown Area Firewise Community Committee is excited to share updates on our journey and celebrate the recent achievement of becoming officially recognized as a Firewise Community by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and CALFIRE.

This has been a longer process than initially anticipated, so we'd like to share with you the efforts that went into this along with the reasons for various delays along the way.

TIMELINE

In January we gathered at the decommissioned Pioneertown county fire station to explore the establishment of a Firewise Community. The outstanding turnout was *"a testament to the resilience of Pioneertown residents who come together even in the coldest of times,"* remarked CALFIRE Captain Drew Smith. Following the tragic Sawtooth Complex Fire in 2006, our community has recognized the critical need to mitigate fire risks surrounding our homes, which can also lead to lower insurance premiums through active volunteer efforts.

Although the Firewise application process encountered some delays, we diligently worked on a detailed parcel map that encompasses every neighborhood within the Pioneertown Area Firewise Community. This ensures that each residential property shown on this map can be identified as part of this Firewise Community.

In the Spring, a committee of neighbors drafted the following an extensive Community **Firewise Hazard Assessment** (which included input from representatives of CALFIRE and the San Bernardino County Fire District), the formulation of a **Firewise Action Plan**, collected **fire mitigation volunteer hours** from the community, and finalized a **map** that encompasses every neighborhood within the Pioneertown Area Firewise Community.

By Summer, all this was then submitted to CALFIRE and the NFPA for review and – following delays around the proposed map – our application was certified in September.

WHAT'S NEXT- Insurance Discounts

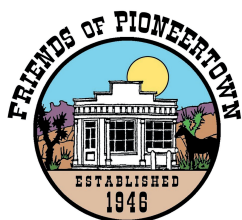
California has recently enacted "Safer from Wildfires" regulations that require insurance companies to recognize Firewise USA® designated communities by providing discounts to property owners in those communities.

It is essential to note that the Certificate and Firewise Map, which you can see on the following pages, can be presented to your insurance agent to help you qualify for lower rates. In some cases additional discounts can be obtained by demonstrating compliance with defensible space requirements and fire hardening of your home. Additional details on how to request insurance discounts can also be found on the next page.

ONGOING

To retain this status each year, we are committed to implementing our action plan to create defensible spaces while logging at least 400 volunteer hours or providing a comparable financial contribution toward fire hazard education and fuel reduction. The community's response for 2025 has been remarkable, with over 250% of the required volunteer contribution documented for the Firewise program!

In just a few weeks, we will launch our volunteer initiatives aimed at further enhancing fire safety in our neighborhoods and upholding our status as a recognized Firewise Community by the NFPA. For further details on this program, please visit this link: <https://readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/firewise-communities/>



Pioneertown Area Firewise Committe members-

Kerrie Aley, Colleen Haggerty, Sarah Kensington with the assistance of the Friends of Pioneertown. We can be reached at FirewisePioneertown@gmail.com

More information about joining the Pioneertown Area Firewise Community can be found here- <https://friendsofpioneertown.org/firewiseform/>



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NFPA processes Firewise USA applications and provides information on the communities that have earned that designation to companies that provide data to home insurers doing business in California. NFPA updates the boundary data for all communities in good standing in the Firewise USA program twice a year, in March and October. This information is then available to insurance companies through the data providers.

The Role NFPA Plays

As people in California learn about the connection between Firewise USA participation and insurance, it's important to realize how the program works and that the benefits of participation do not happen instantaneously. It's also important to understand the role NFPA plays in this process.

Firewise USA recognition is a voluntary process for community-wide education and action. It is not recognition nor certification of action for individual properties. The process for communities to meet all the Firewise USA recognition criteria can take between six months and one year.

- NFPA does not inspect, validate, or review information about specific addresses or homes.
- NFPA is not a regulatory body nor an insurance company. NFPA cannot make determinations about specific addresses, nor can it contact insurance companies on behalf of consumers. It cannot provide data instantly to insurance companies.
- NFPA invests significant resources in updating the boundary data twice a year, but depending on when a community is officially recognized, it could take up to six months for insurance companies to access the data showing that specific properties are within a Firewise USA boundary.

Recognizing the pressure that residents are facing around insurance costs and the value of Firewise USA in demonstrating wildfire risk reduction, NFPA is working to double the speed of collecting, validating, and transmitting the boundary data to its licensed partners. Quarterly updates of data provided to insurers are typical industry standard. Even with quarterly updates, though, it could still take up to three months for insurers to access the Firewise USA data.

What Can California Residents Do Now?

For California residents facing insurance challenges who need to take immediate action, NFPA recommends contacting an insurer and/or a reputable, experienced insurance agent or broker to review your options.

The nonprofit consumer organization United Policyholders offers free guidance on shopping in today's marketplace and reducing your home's chances of being damaged or destroyed in a natural disaster. You can also contact the California Department of Insurance for information on state insurance regulations.



Link to NFPA Notice to CA

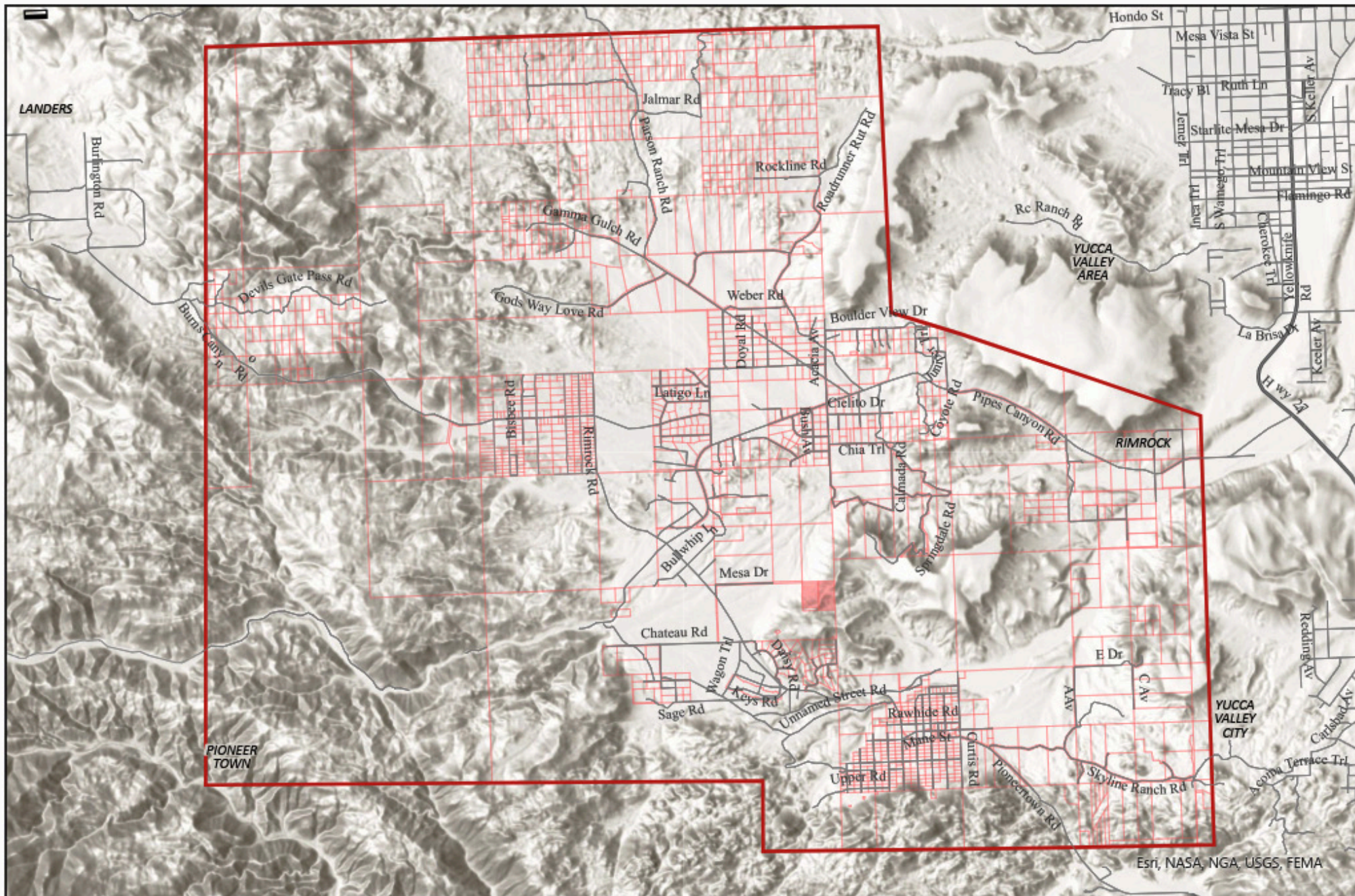
<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/firewise-insurance-discounts-for-california-residents>

Safer From Wildfires is the first program of its kind to mandate insurance premium discounts for home and business owners who try to strengthen protection for their properties against wildfire events. Under the program, insurance companies will reward customers who take specific mitigation precautions, including:

Link to CA Dept of Insurance
Safer From Wildfires

<https://www.insurance.ca.gov/01-consumers/200-wrr/Safer-from-Wildfires.cfm>

9/23/2025



Elizabeth Smith - CAL FIRE - BDU - 20250808




Firewise
Community
Boundary


Parcel

Firewise Community Data:
Parcels: 1,762

**Pioneertown Area
Firewise Community**

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Pioneertown Area Firewise Community

9/23/2025