

FAC New Leader Action Sheet

Getting Your Community Organized

First Steps: Organize Your Core Team

- **Form a small, dedicated committee** (minimum 3 people- 5 is better)
 - Start with people who are passionate and ready to act.
 - Use existing relationships — neighbors, friends, HOA members, etc.
 - Try to include people who have experience in working with the community and volunteer groups.
 - Make sure that your group works well together and understand their role.
 - **Decide how you'll collect contact info**
 - Options: Google Form with QR code, Excel sheet, paper signup- whatever your group feels more comfortable using- use more than one method.
 - **Canvas your neighborhood**
 - Knock on doors or drop off flyers.
 - Introduce your committee and FAC/Firewise goals at an impromptu community meeting in someone's garden, in the street, on an empty lot.
 - Walk and talk- you will meet the most people this way- do this together as a committee.
 - **Don't do it alone- divide and conquer**
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Outreach & Communication

- **Create a flyer or handout** (examples available)
 - Include: what FAC/Firewise is, committee intros, QR code/email signup, and any upcoming events.
 - **Tahoe RCD can help you print materials!** and have additional publications to share.
- **Leverage existing events**
 - Use block parties, HOA meetings, neighborhood BBQs, or other gatherings.
 - Set up an info table and gather contacts.
- **Request support from partners**
 - Invite Tahoe RCD, local fire district, CERT, Master Gardeners, TEAM Bear to do a demo (e.g., vents, defensible space talk).
- **Use community channels**

- HOA newsletters/emails/websites (MailChimp), Facebook groups, community boards, or just talking to neighbors while out walking. Use the HOA template-their system works so recreate for non-HOA neighborhoods.
 - **Post promotional signs**
 - Use your committee members' gardens to promote FAC/Firewise using lawn signs.
 - Hang Defensible Space banners in prominent places (available from Tahoe RCD).
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Plan and Host Events

- **Host one outreach event and one workday to start**
 - Outreach = raise awareness, gather contacts.
 - Workday = defensible space clearing, organizing volunteers, inviting fire officials.
 - **Use the event to build momentum**
 - Collect contact info and recruit new volunteers.
 - Share next steps and follow-up actions.
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Tap into Available Resources

- **Tahoe Living with Fire (LWF) Website:** <https://www.tahoelivingwithfire.com>
 - **Get Prepared:** Home hardening, defensible space, smoke, emergency alerts.
 - **Get Informed:** News, updates, maps of local fuels reduction projects.
 - **Get Involved:** Fire Adapted Communities info, event calendar, videos, guides.
 - **Download the Neighborhood Leader Guide & Check out the Library**
 - Includes: step-by-step planning, outreach materials, contact lists, etc.
 - **Explore Firewise USA resources** for becoming a nationally recognized Firewise community.
 - **Fire Districts:** each fire district is different, but all have free chipping and defensible space services funded through BLM. Trailers and green waste dumpsters are also available but need to be requested and this varies by fire district.
 - **Stay up to date with current wildfire events**
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Stay Connected

- **Connect with other FAC leaders through Tahoe RCD**
 - Ask questions, share what's working, get advice. They have experience.
- **Subscribe to the newsletter** via the Tahoe LWF website and stay up to date.

- **Attend future webinars** for ongoing support and education- share this information with your community so more people are involved.
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Set Goals & Build Over Time

- **Aim to gather contact info for 75–95% of your neighborhood over time**
 - Start small and grow — increase contact list by 10% annually.
 - **Track progress:** participation, events hosted, area treated, etc.
 - **Celebrate wins:** share success stories, before/after photos, neighbor shout-outs.
 - **Don't over-reach:** keep things simple to limit costs. If you really want a website/newsletter you will need to request donations from your group to maintain over the years. Direct funding is not available from Tahoe RCD or the fire districts.
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Final Thoughts

- **Keep it simple** — you don't need to do everything at once.
- **Use tools and templates** already available to you. Request from the Tahoe RCD or download from the website.
- **Start with connection** — build relationships, and the work will follow.
- **Stay encouraged** and don't hesitate to reach out for support.

