



FIREWISE USA
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS



FIREWISE LEADERS GUIDE TO THE

Firewise USA Portal

Updated 2026

Learn step-by-step how to
submit your initial Firewise
USA application



**LIVING
WITH FIRE
TAHOE**

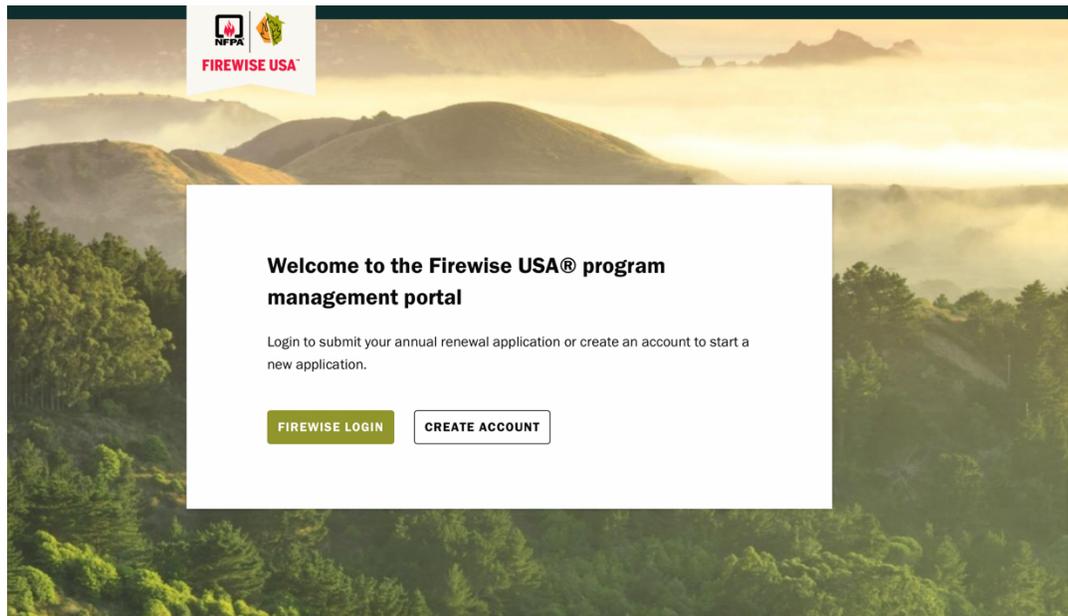
Firewise Leaders Guide to the Firewise USA Portal

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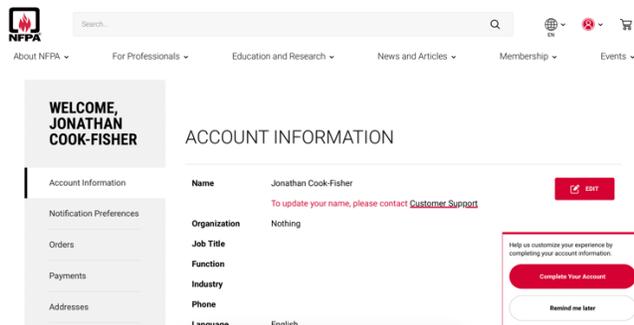
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How to create a Firewise account

- **Go to** portal.firewise.org
- **Create** an account
- **To complete the next step, you will need:**
 - Resident Leader Information,
 - Site Name,
 - Number of Dwelling Units,
 - Community Contact Information,
 - Location of your Site



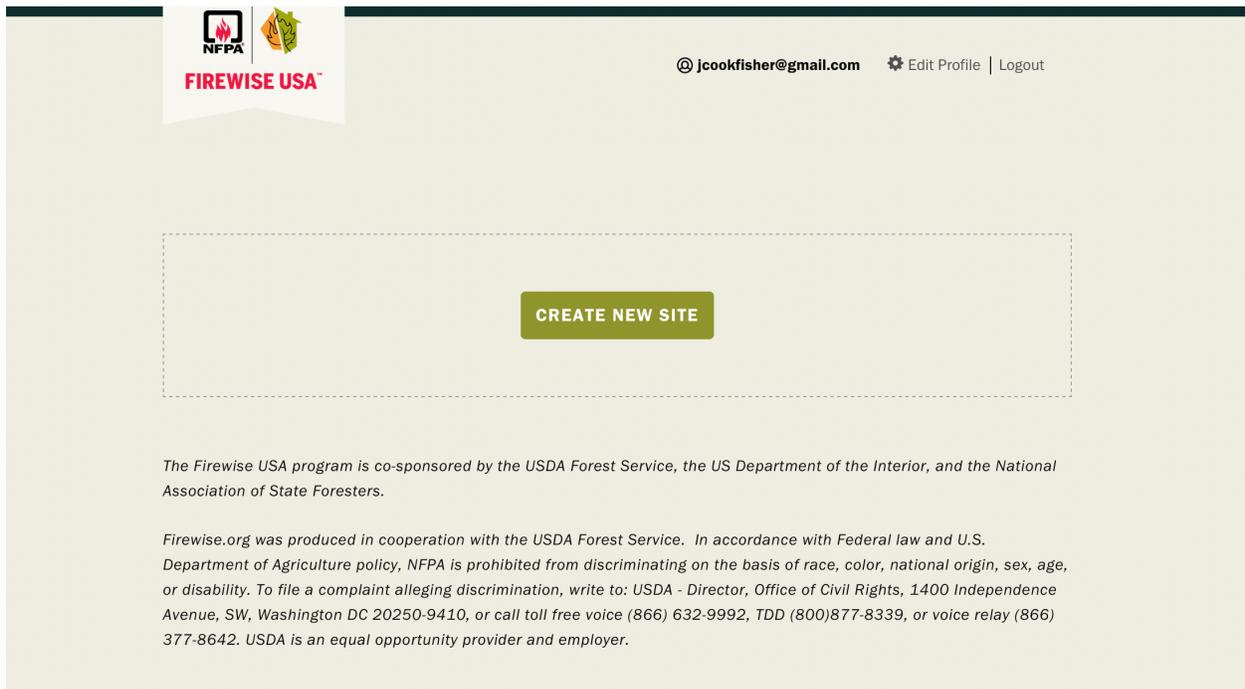
NOTE: If you see the page below you are NOT on the Firewise portal



How to create a new Firewise site profile

Before a site can apply for recognition, a profile for the site must be created.

- **Login** to your account at portal.firewise.org
- **Select** 'Create New Site'



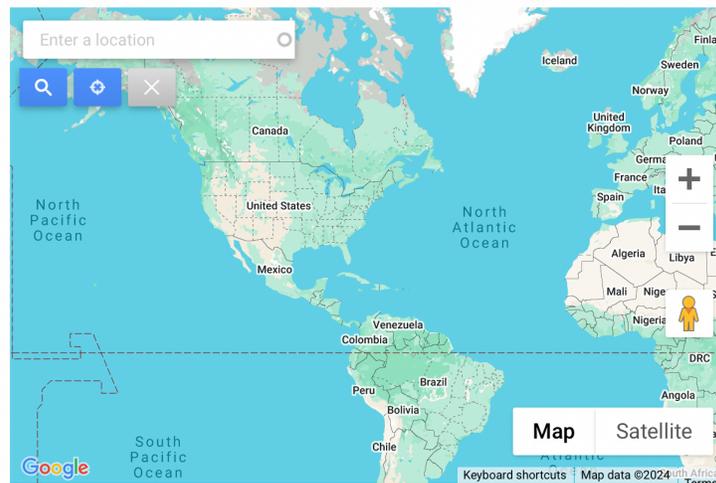
- **Complete** the 'Getting Started' section (Site Profile)- see next steps

- **Step 1.** Map the Site
- **Open** Google maps and right click on your location
In the pop up window you will see the latitude/longitude in decimal format at the top
Copy coordinates by left click

Map Your Site

Latitude and longitude data provides participants with current fire condition information and includes your site on NFPA's nationwide map.

Enter your address below to determine your latitude and longitude data. Then choose to join an existing Firewise site or continue with creating a new site for your community.*



CREATE NEW SITE

Step 2. Resident Leader information,
Regional Coordinator information,
Firewise Site Name,
Number of Dwelling Units and Residents,
Additional information

Tell Us More

Fields with * are required.

What's your role?

Resident Leader. I will be managing my site at the local level.

Regional Coordinator. I help Resident Leaders navigate the Firewise Program.

Do you have a Regional Coordinator helping you?

Yes

No

Regional Coordinator's Email: *

Name of your Firewise site? *

How many dwelling units are in the boundary of your Firewise site? *

How many residents live within the boundaries of your site?

Share your site website:

For example, a social media page, HOA or neighborhood website such as <http://www.hoawebsite.com>

How did you hear about the Firewise Program?

Select a background for the site Dashboard:

Yes

No, I'll do this later

Cover Image

UPLOAD

Please upload an image to represent your site. Once uploaded, you can click the thumbnail to select the point around which the image will be cropped to fit your dashboard banner. You can always change this later by selecting 'Edit Community Details' on your site Dashboard.
One file only.
256 MB limit.
Allowed types: png gif jpg jpeg.

BACK **CONTINUE**

Step 3. Site Contact Information

Site Contact Information

This information is important so that we know who to send your Firewise Recognition materials to, which includes signage.

Use my contact information as the site contact information

This option was disabled because your current address does not contain required information.

Street address *

City * State * Zip code *

I would also like to add my P.O. Box

BACK **CONTINUE**

- **Review** the information.

NOTE: this information can be updated at 'Community Details' on your Dashboard BUT you will not be able to update the map, Resident Leader information or change the site name

I confirm the information is accurate and understand that once I submit, the site name and Resident Leader can only be changed by a Firewise Administrator.

BACK **SUBMIT**

- **Agree** to the 'User Agreement' by clicking the checkbox

Resident Leader- main point of contact. This person has the log in and password for the Firewise portal. They complete the application and provide neighbors with the Firewise certificate. *Please share your login and password with your committee members*

Regional Coordinators- these individuals assist the Resident Leader. In the Tahoe Basin:

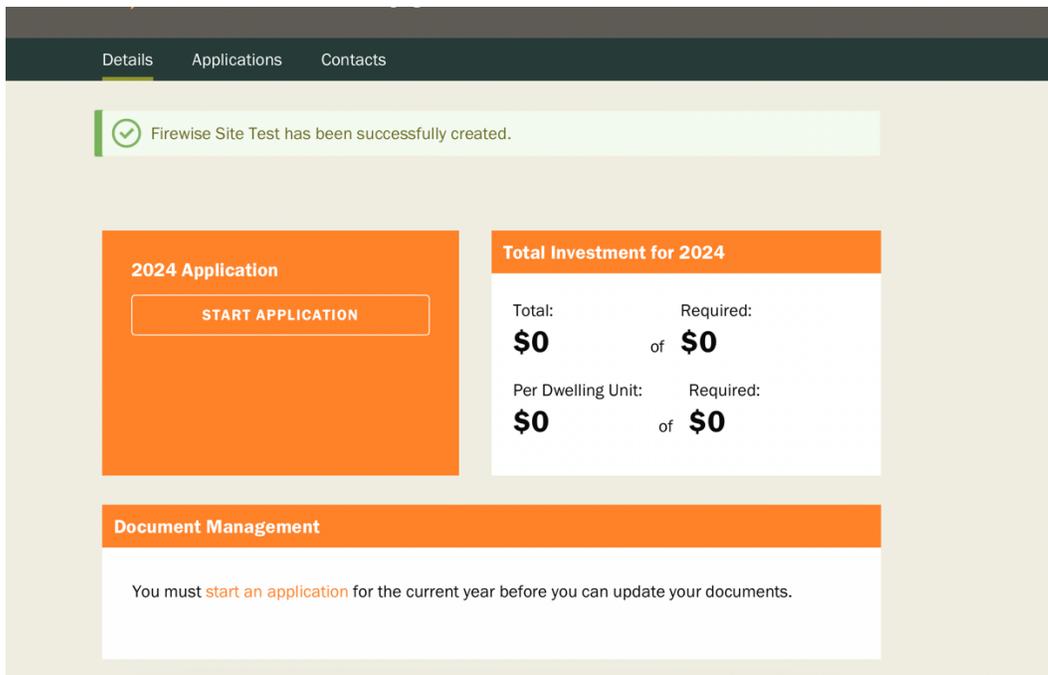
1. Fire District Defensible Space Inspector
2. Tahoe RCD Staff fire@tahoercd.org

Dwelling Unit/Residents- is a house. An apartment building with 10 units would be considered as 10 dwelling units. *Residents (number of people residing in the neighborhood) are estimated*

NOTE: the dwelling numbers must match on your Risk Assessment and Action Plan

How to apply for Firewise USA Recognition

- **Login** to your account at portal.firewise.org.
NOTE: you must have a site profile already created
- **Start** 'New Application'. You will now be redirected to the 'Application Overview Page'



- **Use** the Navigation Bar to move through the Steps (Steps 1-9)

Step One: Overview

- **Read** and continue

2024 Firewise USA Application *Test*

Step: 1 of 9

Overview



Welcome to the Firewise USA Program Application

Participation in the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise USA Program demonstrates a commitment by residents to reduce their wildfire risks, along with a desire to make where they live better prepared for when wildfires happen.

Fields with * are required.

CONTINUE

Step Two: State Requirements

- **Download** the Risk Assessment document to your desktop. *Name this document with the name of your site and the date*

Example: KekinRiskAssessment2024

NOTE: this document is not digitized on the portal and WILL NOT save automatically

- **Download** the 'California Action Plan' under number three of the outlined steps. This Action Plan is created for three years. *Name this document with the name of your site and the date*

Example: KekinActionPlan2025-27

<https://readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/firewise-communities/>

NOTE: Tahoe RCD will also send you a copy. You CANNOT use a regular word document

Step: 2 of 9 State Requirements ▼

Please review the section below to see if your state has additional program requirements.

If applicable in your state - download and review the additional requirements before beginning your application.

California State Requirements

New sites are required to use the NFPA provided Wildfire Risk Assessment template and the California specific 3 Year Action Plan that clearly outlines measurable goals. Please download the documents below:

[Wildfire Risk Assessment](#)

[3 Year Action Plan](#)

I have reviewed my state's requirements.*

BACK **SAVE & CLOSE** **CONTINUE**

Step Three: Risk Assessment

- **Upload** the Risk Assessment when completed by your allocated Defensible Space Inspector OR your Committee

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Risk Assessment" at "Step: 3 of 9". The form includes a heading "Risk Assessment" and a paragraph explaining its importance. It contains a text input field for the name of the assessor, a file upload section with an "UPLOAD" button, and a date picker for "Date Assessment Completed" set to 10/16/2024. At the bottom are "BACK", "SAVE & CLOSE", and "CONTINUE" buttons.

Step: 3 of 9 Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment

The assessment of the area within the site's boundary is an important component of your application and is instrumental in developing the action plan's risk reduction priorities. Download the [Risk Assessment Template here](#).

Effective January 2018: All risk assessments need to be updated at a minimum of every five years. **Please Note:** Your risk assessment will need to be updated in 2029. You may elect to update it sooner than that date.

Name of agency, organization, or individual that conducted the risk assessment*

▼ Attach Completed Assessment Form

Add a new file*

Unlimited number of files can be uploaded to this field.
256 MB limit.
Allowed types: pdf doc docx xlsxlsx jpg png.

Date Assessment Completed

- **Double Check-**
Committee members/fire district staff must all be included on the 'Participant Table' including their name, position, email, and telephone number,
dwelling numbers match,
all boxes have been checked,
there are no blanks,
all 'Observations' have been summarized
- **Add** the map of your neighborhood. If your fire district has not added the map into your Risk Assessment *Tahoe RCD will provide you with a map* which you will upload as a separate document under the Risk Assessment section
- **Note** the Date Assessment Completed

Step Four: Board/Committee

- **Click** ‘Yes I have established a board/committee’
NOTE: you must have three members minimum. *Fire District and Tahoe RCD staff are NOT committee members*
- **Enter** your committee members information
NOTE: this is shown as optional but, in the Tahoe Basin, we would like everyone to add this information

Step: 4 of 9 Board/Committee ▼

Board/Committee

Each Firewise site is required to have a board/committee that develops and oversees the implementation of the action plan, educational outreach activities and annual renewal process. This can be an already existing board/committee.

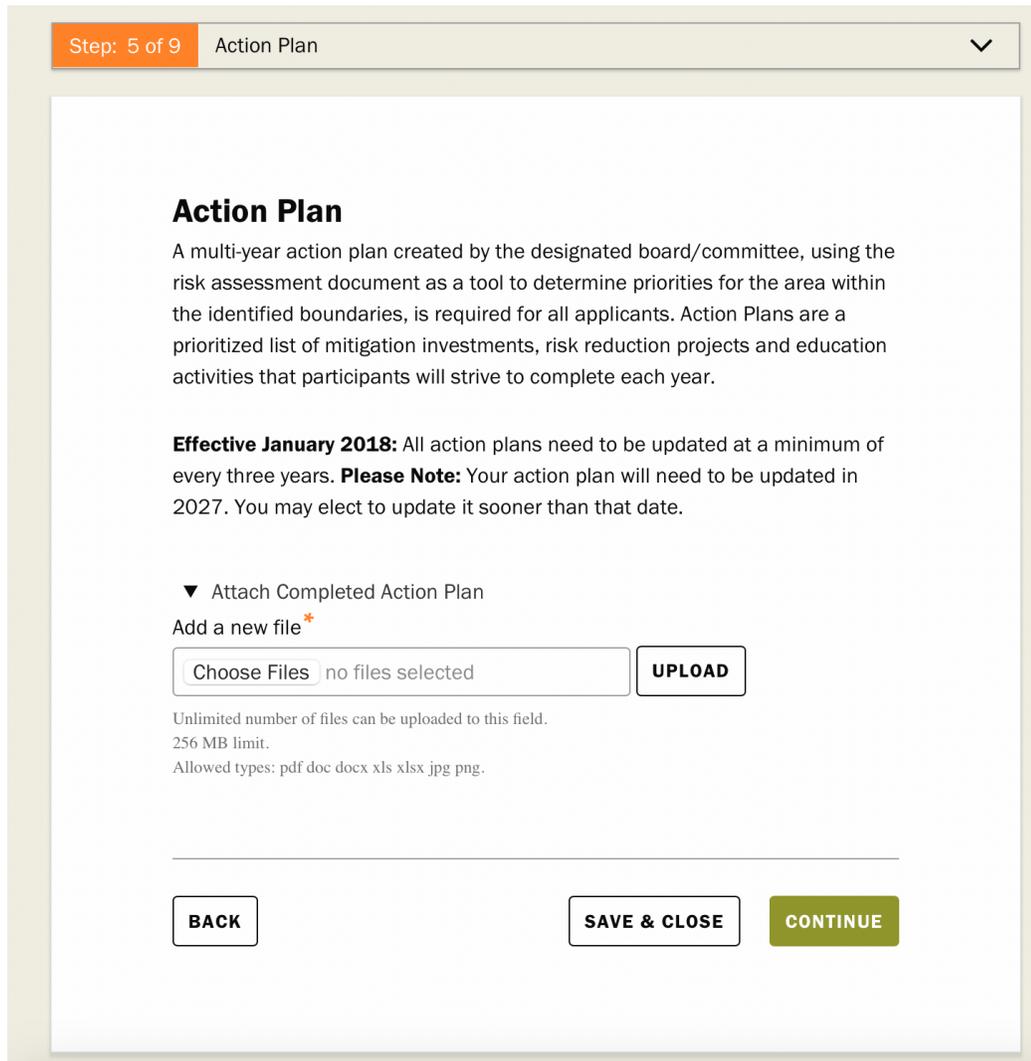
Yes, I have established a board/committee*

[BACK](#) [SAVE & CLOSE](#) [CONTINUE](#)

Step Five: Action Plan

- **Read** the CalFire instructions on page one, **Complete** and then **Upload** the Action Plan.

NOTE: Save as a word document to allow Tahoe RCD to make edits if required



The screenshot shows a web interface for the 'Action Plan' step, which is the 5th of 9 steps. The page title is 'Action Plan'. The main heading is 'Action Plan'. Below the heading is a paragraph explaining that a multi-year action plan is required for all applicants, detailing its purpose and components. A note states that all action plans need to be updated every three years, with a specific note for 2027. There is a section for attaching a completed action plan, including a file upload button and an 'UPLOAD' button. Below the upload section are three buttons: 'BACK', 'SAVE & CLOSE', and 'CONTINUE'.

Step: 5 of 9 Action Plan

Action Plan

A multi-year action plan created by the designated board/committee, using the risk assessment document as a tool to determine priorities for the area within the identified boundaries, is required for all applicants. Action Plans are a prioritized list of mitigation investments, risk reduction projects and education activities that participants will strive to complete each year.

Effective January 2018: All action plans need to be updated at a minimum of every three years. **Please Note:** Your action plan will need to be updated in 2027. You may elect to update it sooner than that date.

▼ Attach Completed Action Plan

Add a new file*

Choose Files | no files selected **UPLOAD**

Unlimited number of files can be uploaded to this field.
256 MB limit.
Allowed types: pdf doc docx xls xlsx jpg png.

BACK **SAVE & CLOSE** **CONTINUE**

- **Enter** the date in the header. Your Action Plan starts the year after you are applying (ex. you are submitting your application in 2025 then your Action Plan will be for 2026-2028). Also, remember to add the dates within the document under Year 1, Year 2, Year 3

- **Create** actions for each year under each section. You **MUST** hold a minimum of one workday per year and this will be noted under the 'Education and Outreach' section. *You will not be able to complete and submit this application without a workday*

NOTE: you must create a minimum of two actions per section, do not duplicate all actions for each year, you must use recommendations from the Risk Assessment in your actions, *DO NOT say you are working towards defensible space compliance*

- **Ensure** that if you enter your dwelling numbers in the Site Description that this matches what is recorded in your 'Community Details and 'Risk Assessment'

Step Six: Educational Outreach

- **Click** ‘Other’ to record your required Annual Workday (Wildfire Community Preparedness Day) and note what you did and the date
- **Add** ‘Activity/Event(s)’ that you or other Committee members have completed within the current calendar year

NOTE: Committee members **MUST** participate in one educational event per year

Step: 6 of 9 Educational Outreach

Educational Outreach

Each participating site is required to hold a minimum of one wildfire risk reduction educational outreach event or activity annually. Please provide details of your annual activities in the section below.

Record an Activity or Event

What educational outreach activities were completed? *

- Completed a national Wildfire Community Preparedness Day project (1st Saturday in May)
- Coordinated a community-wide awareness/educational activity that increases wildfire risk reduction actions and overall preparedness
- Delivered via door-to-door, information on the community's wildfire danger
- Distributed "Welcome packets" with wildfire literature to all new residents
- Evacuation drill in collaboration with a law enforcement agency, fire department or local emergency manager
- Held a fire-resistant plant species workshop for residents in collaboration w/the local cooperative extension office
- HOA meeting or community-wide presentation that detailed the need and importance for individual wildfire preparedness
- Local emergency manager provided a presentation on building an emergency preparedness kit
- Mentored adjacent communities on how to become a Firewise site
- Provided an insurance policy clinic for residents to ensure policies are up-to-date with local building codes and costs, and inventories of personal belongings
- Residents participated in a volunteer mitigation activity for a senior or disabled neighbor
- Wildfire related article(s) placed in the community newsletter
- Wildfire workshop for residents with speakers/demonstrations from a forestry agency, fire department, or emergency management office
- COVID-19 challenges
- Other

SAVE ACTIVITY OR EVENT

BACK **SAVE & CLOSE** **CONTINUE**

Step Seven: Vegetation Removal

- **Record** a removal- the estimated yardage of vegetation removed
NOTE: a typical estimate would be 1-3 yards per house (5 x 39-gallon bags= 1 cubic yard)

Step: 7 of 9 Vegetation Removal

Vegetation Removal

A major component of wildfire risk reduction is the removal of vegetation (shrubs, brush, limbs, trees, etc.) from individual properties and common-area property. Tracking vegetation removal provides forestry and fire agencies with information on the quantity of potential wildfire fuel that's been eliminated from the area(s).

Was vegetation within the site's boundary removed during this calendar year?

RECORD A REMOVAL (+)

BACK **SAVE & CLOSE** **CONTINUE**

- This is the **total yardage** for vegetation removal not just the yardage for your own house but the whole neighborhood

- **Check ‘Removed Vegetation’**

Step: 7 of 9 Vegetation Removal

Vegetation Removal

A major component of wildfire risk reduction is the removal of vegetation (shrubs, brush, limbs, trees, etc.) from individual properties and common-area property. Tracking vegetation removal provides forestry and fire agencies with information on the quantity of potential wildfire fuel that's been eliminated from the area(s).

Record the quantity of vegetation removed

If total amount of vegetation removed is known, enter it below:

Cubic Yards

If the total amount is unknown, select the appropriate option below for tools that will assist in calculating or reporting of vegetation removed!

Removed Vegetation

Record Other Types of Vegetation Management

Prescribed Burning

Recycled/Reused Vegetation

Comments

Take note of anything else you did

SAVE VEGETATION REMOVAL

BACK **SAVE & CLOSE** **CONTINUE**

- **Add a comment of what work was completed**

Step Eight: Risk Reduction Investment

Step: 8 of 9

Risk Reduction Investment



Risk Reduction Investment

Investing the equivalent of one volunteer hour (valued at \$31.80), per residential dwelling unit within the site's boundary, in annual wildfire risk reduction actions is a requirement of the national recognition program's criteria for maintaining an "In Good Standing" status.

Total Investment for 2024

⊗ Investment Not Met

Total: Required:

\$0 of **\$318**

Per Dwelling Unit: Required:

\$0 of **\$31.80**

Record an Investment

The accumulated risk reduction actions, activities and expenses completed prior to submitting a new application, are eligible for use in meeting the program's requirements. Please note: Following acceptance of your initial application, all future year's actions, activities and expenses must occur within the current calendar year to be eligible for use in meeting the annual renewal investment requirement. [A list of Time and Expense Investment examples is available at Firewise.org.](#)

RECORD HOURS WORKED (+)

RECORD MONEY SPENT (+)

- **Enter** hours worked broken down into; Dwelling Unit, Miscellaneous and Landscaping if possible. These hours will be converted into dollars and displayed. Hours are calculated by the national volunteer hourly rate. *Firewise USA prefers that you breakdown your hours and do not provide them with one number*

NOTE: This information is collected primarily during the required yearly workday but any hours within the calendar year can also be collected and recorded

RECORD HOURS WORKED ⊖
RECORD MONEY SPENT ⊕

Dwelling Unit

hours

Examples include: removing pine needles and leaf litter from roof and gutters, replaced vinyl gutters with metal gutters, ignition-resistant exterior improvements, installing screening on vents, flammable items removed from under decks and porches, inspect roof and replace missing shingles, etc.

Landscaping (0 – 100 ft. from base of Dwelling Unit)

hours

Examples include: installation of hardscaping, replacing combustible mulches with stone/gravel options, tree and shrub removal, raking and removal of pine needles, leaves, ground litter/debris, tree trimming/limbing, moving firewood, lawn and native grass maintenance, etc.

Common areas

hours

(HOA or other Homeowner jointly owned property within the site boundary) Activities include: Tree thinning, mastication and brush removal, grass maintenance, fire break construction, etc.

Miscellaneous

hours

Meetings, presentations, program administration, home site visits etc.

Entry Note

Total Hours
0 Hours

SAVE INVESTMENT

BACK
SAVE & CLOSE
CONTINUE

- **Enter** expenses/investments related to defensible space/home hardening ex. replacement of roof, new deck/fencing

RECORD HOURS WORKED +RECORD MONEY SPENT -

Chipper Costs: (Purchase/Rental, Fuel & Oil, Disposal Fees, etc.)

\$

Other Equipment Costs: (Chain Saw purchase/rental, Power Equip. purchase/rental, Hand Tools, Protective Equipment, etc.)

\$

Contractor Costs: (Arborists, Landscapers, Professional Forestry Services, Debris Removal, etc.)

\$

Home Improvement Costs: (Roofs, Decks, Windows, Vent Screening, Retrofits, etc.)

\$

Landscaping/DIY

\$

Miscellaneous

\$

Vehicle Mileage: (Slash Drop-off, Rental Equipment pickup, Meetings, etc.)

Entry Note

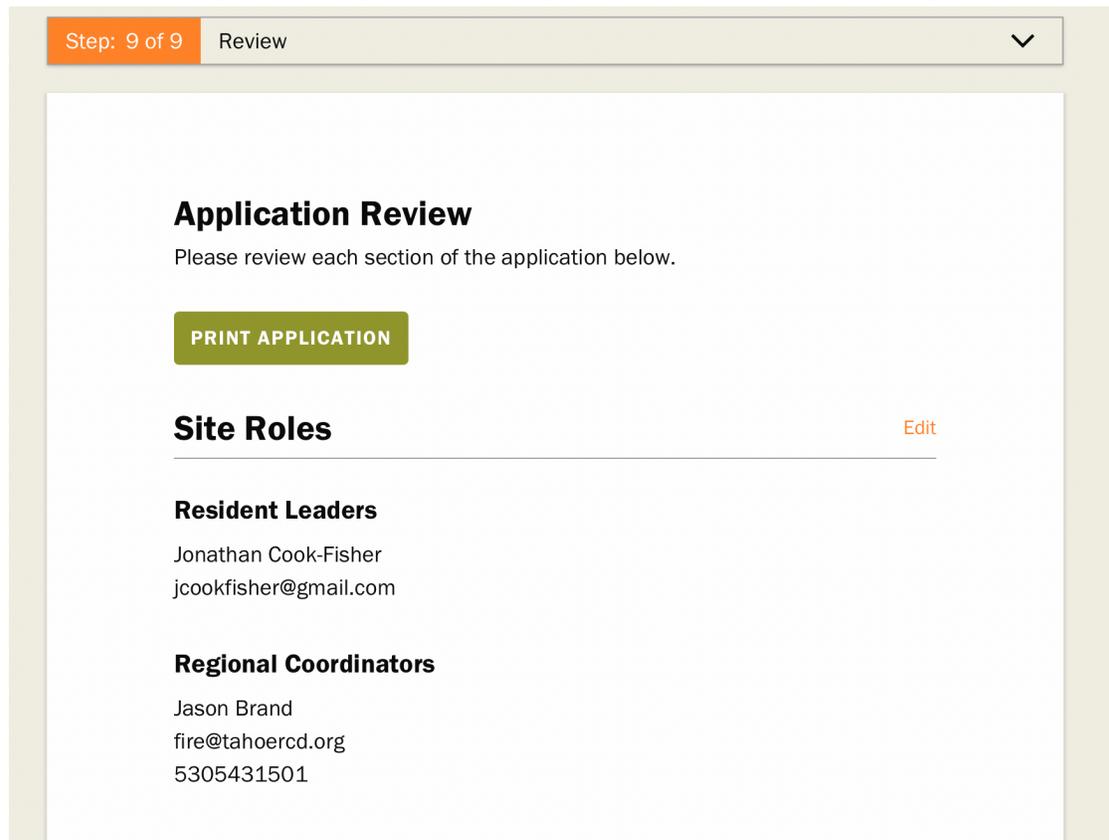
Total Spent

\$0

SAVE INVESTMENT

Step Nine: Review

- **Review** and double check that you have included all the required information



Step: 9 of 9 Review

Application Review

Please review each section of the application below.

[PRINT APPLICATION](#)

Site Roles [Edit](#)

Resident Leaders

Jonathan Cook-Fisher
jcookfisher@gmail.com

Regional Coordinators

Jason Brand
fire@tahoercd.org
5305431501

- **Contact** the Tahoe RCD Regional Coordinator. *They must review prior to submittal*
This reduces the likelihood of your application being returned for edits which can lengthen the approval process by one to three weeks
- **Choose** the number of Firewise Signs that you would like under 'Recognition Materials'. *No more than two are available. You can purchase more here: <https://www.nfpa.org/product/id/fwc92117s>*
- **Submit.** As the Firewise Leader you will now submit your application

How to submit your Firewise site's yearly renewal

Renewal Application Video:

<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/annual-renewal-information>

- **Select 'Start Renewal Application'**
- **Step 1: Update your 'Site Contact Information'**
Make changes to your 'Site Contact Information' if needed
- **Step 2: Overview**
Update leader/coordinator/site information if needed
- **Step 3: Review 'State Requirements'**
If applicable download and review additional requirements
- **Step 4: Update your 'Risk Assessment'**
Check 'Reuse the current Assessment' unless required to Upload a new Risk Assessment (updated every 5 years)

How do you want to provide the site's Risk Assessment? *

- Upload a new Risk Assessment
- Reuse the current Assessment

Date Assessment Completed



10/06/2020

Previous year file - [Completed 2020 Agate Bay_FirewiseCommAssess_NTFFPD completed \(2\)11.14.20.pdf](#)

- **Step 5: Update ‘Your Board/Committee’ (optional)**

Make changes if needed

- **Step 6: Update ‘Your Action Plan’**

Check ‘Reuse the current Action Plan’ unless required to Upload a new Action Plan (updated every 3 years)

NOTE: Download and edit the California Required Action Plan. You CANNOT use a regular word document

How do you want to provide the site’s Action Plan? *

- Upload a new Action Plan
- Reuse the current Action Plan

▼ Attach Completed Action Plan

File information	Operations
 Agate Bay AP.docx	<input type="button" value="REMOVE"/>
 Draft 4 Agate Bay Firewise Action Plan - Google Docs.pdf	<input type="button" value="REMOVE"/>
 AgateBayFirewiseActionPlan2023.pdf	<input type="button" value="REMOVE"/>

Add a new file

No file chosen

- **Step 7: Record ‘Educational Outreach’ activities/events**

Check all relevant boxes. For your Firewise Workday check ‘Other’ and note the date and what activities you completed on that date

NOTE: Committee Members **MUST** attend one educational event and each Firewise site **MUST** complete one wildfire risk reduction educational outreach event or activity (workday) per calendar year

- **Step 8: Record ‘Vegetation Removal’**

Enter the number of cubic yards of vegetation removed within the calendar year

Was vegetation within the site's boundary removed during this calendar year?

RECORD A REMOVAL (+)

- **Step 9: Record ‘Risk Reduction Investment’**

Enter the number of volunteer hours worked and money spent within the calendar year



Record an Investment

Risk reduction actions, activities and expenses that occurred throughout the current calendar year are eligible for use in meeting the site's annual renewal investment requirement. [A list of Time and Expense Investment examples is available at Firewise.org.](#)

RECORD HOURS WORKED (+)

RECORD MONEY SPENT (+)

- **Step 10: Review and Submit**