

The Fire Plug



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Community of Kensington and the Wildland Urban Interface

California is experiencing fire season year-round due to the extreme drought. This requires everyone to be on heightened alert for any threat of wildland fire.

If you live next to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) you must prepare your property and surrounding vegetation to provide firefighters the defensible space that they need to protect your home. The buffer zone you create helps keep the fire away from your home and reduces the risk from flying embers.



A home within one mile of a wildland fire can be threatened by wind driven embers, even if it is located outside the WUI and is far from the front of the fire. Fire resistant construction materials and the quality of the defensible space surrounding it are what give a home the best chance to survive a wildland fire.

You must be prepared well before the fire occurs by checking and maintaining the following:

Roofs

Clean leaves, limbs and pine needles from the valleys, rain gutters and end of barrel tiles on a regular basis.

Eaves

Embers can gather under the open eaves and ignite exposed wood or debris. Maintaining clean eaves or boxed-in eaves provides better protection.

Vents

Make sure all eaves and gable vents have screens to prevent wind-driven embers from entering the attic area.

Balconies/Decks

Use heavy timber or non-combustible construction material for decks. Enclose the underside of balconies and decks with a fire-resistant material to prevent any wind-driven from entering.

To learn more about preparing your home to withstand a fire, the Kensington Fire Protection District has a limited supply of "The Homeowner's Guide to Wildfire Prevention" available to residents only. Contact the District office at (510) 215-4450 to get your copy or email us at fire@kensingtonfire.org

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Annual Shredding Event

It's time for annual spring cleaning! The Kensington Fire Protection District will hold its once-a-year shredding event on **Saturday, April 25, 2015**.

This popular event will take place from **10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** in the Kensington library parking lot (across from Arlington Community Church).

We encourage all Kensington homeowners to be fire safe so be sure to take advantage of this opportunity to clean out excess paper from your home and have it securely and safely disposed. All paper shredding is recycled by returning it to a paper mill. If you have any questions about this event, please contact (510) 215-4450.



Sign Up for CPR/First Aid Training

Your Fire District continues to offer CPR/First Aid training opportunities throughout the year. Our next two training sessions will be held on Saturday, April 25th and Saturday, August 15th. For more information, contact KFPD at (510) 215-4450. Priority registration is given to residents.

CERT Training Opportunities

The Kensington Fire Protection District offers training opportunities to prepare yourself and your family for a major disaster—CERT Training and CERT Boot Camp. To sign up for either of the following classes or to receive the 2015 training calendar, please contact Kensington Fire at (510) 215-4450 or email fire@kensingtonfire.org.

CERT BOOT CAMP:

CERT training opportunities include our day-long CERT Boot Camp which will take place in the spring on **Saturday, April 11th**. This class is from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at the Arlington Park Clubhouse (1120 Arlington Blvd.) in El Cerrito. This class is a non-certified, condensed format of our 8-week long CERT class but touches on all of the same topics.

Classes are free of charge.



CERT TRAINING:

Utilizing the national CERT curriculum, this 20-hour program is designed to assist residents of Kensington to be self-sufficient in the event of a disaster. The fall session will take place at the Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Avenue, Kensington on **Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.** The final drill will take place on a Saturday. CERT participants receive free emergency preparedness items to complement their training. Sign up now or make-up a missed class to receive your training certificate.

8/25/15	Introduction to CERT
9/1/15	Disaster Psychology/DSW
9/8/15	Disaster Medical Part 1
9/15/15	Disaster Medical Part 2
9/22/15	Fire Suppression and Utility Control
9/29/15	Search and Rescue
10/6/15	CERT Organization
10/13/15	Terrorism Awareness
10/24/15	Simulation/Drill

(All Day at Fire Training Facility)

Pharmaceutical Disposal Event

KFPD will again be providing its on-going pharmaceutical disposal program to the Kensington community. This is a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription or over-the-counter drugs, while educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications.

On **Saturday, May 9, 2015**, you can bring your unused/ unwanted medications to the Kensington fire station for safe disposal. We will be accepting medications on that day between the hours of **10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** No questions are asked.

We are no longer able to accept all medications. Narcotics (or controlled substances) will not be accepted and will need to be disposed of through the West County Household Hazardous Waste Program. We will accept all other medications including liq-

uids and sharps. We will not be accepting any household hazardous waste.

Please help keep toxins out of our water systems (do not flush unwanted medicines down the toilet!) and unused medications out of the hands of youths.



If you have any questions about this program please contact KFPD at (510) 215-4450.

Annual Vegetation Management Inspections

The community of Kensington is in a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone".

Each year, during the spring months, Fire District personnel inspect every property in Kensington. These inspections are conducted via "drive-by". Inspections can also be complaint driven (if we cannot see the alleged hazard from the sidewalk). The Fire Prevention Officer will be checking properties to ensure that they comply with the Kensington Vegetation Management Standards that help keep Kensington a safe community.

The properties that do not comply will receive written notification from the Fire Prevention Officer. Reinspection of those properties in violation will then take place, followed by a KFPD Board of Directors hearing if the property is still not abated. This notification process is in place to remind homeowners that it is your responsibility to protect your home and the community from the devastating effects of wildfire. In past years, voluntary compliance from the residents has been outstanding and we look forward to full cooperation this year.

If you need guidance in resolving a fire hazard on your property or you would like a copy of our

Defensible Space brochure, please call the Fire Prevention Officer at (510) 215-4457 for assistance. We are happy to help!

Remember that you make the greatest difference in keeping your home, neighborhood and community more fire safe!

Vegetation management tips:

Trim tall trees up 10 feet from the ground. Remove dead and dying branches, loose and papery bark, and fallen branches.

Cut trees 10 feet back from chimney openings.

Install a spark arrestor on all chimneys and stovepipes.

Keep roof and decks free of leaves, needles, twigs or other dead vegetation.

Fire resistive plants and shrubs are recommended.

All abatement must be maintained throughout fire season.

For additional information:

Go to "www.kensingtonfire.org/safety/index.shtml" to download a file of the District's full vegetation management guidelines and a list of recommended plants and trees.

**KENSINGTON FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT**

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Child Car Seat Installation

Drivers are responsible for proper installation of child safety seats. Properly installed child safety seats are critical for the survival of an infant or toddler involved in a car crash.

Since the correct installation of a child restraint system can be a challenge, KFPD offers free child safety seat inspections for Kensington residents only. Two of our firefighters are trained Child Safety Seat Technicians.

Residents who have installation problems or are unsure if their child safety seat is properly installed can contact KFPD for a free inspection by calling (510) 215-4450 or emailing: fire@kensingtonfire.org. It typically takes approximately one week for an appointment after we are contacted.

Please arrive at your appointment with the car seat installed and if possible, bring your car seat's instructions. Having the child present is best but not necessary.

The Fire Department is a member of the Child Seat Safety Coalition sponsored by John Muir Health. Throughout the year, the Coalition sponsors child safety seat checkpoint events at various locations.

