

Village Firewise For Existing Properties

Purpose

Bring all properties in the Village of Taos Ski Valley to safe firewise standards. This is intended to slow down or stop uncontrolled spread of fires within village boundaries, This plan is focused on bringing existing residential properties up to standard, New construction is already covered under existing Village standards. Large nonresidential properties (TSVI, Northside) will be dealt with standards appropriate for their size.

The plan is intended to encourage and help property owners to achieve standards that protect their neighbors and the village. It is also intended to provide a paper trail of the Village's attempts to gain voluntary compliance. If we run into noncompliance the paper trail will be key in resolving the problem.

Plan Steps

1. Obtain an updated list of properties and owners from Village staff (GIS and admin). This will be critical to rate properties. This information will be used to create an online app. to make management of documentation and correspondence easier for Firewise members and staff (in process by Neal).
2. Develop a check sheet for rating the firewise status of a property (see attached).
3. Obtain a series of maps (village GIS) for different sections of the village. These will identify each lot in the village.
4. Rate each property in the village. The rating sheet and a picture of the property will form the first documents attached to a property. This can be carried out by village staff, volunteers and any available resources.
5. Review the ratings for accuracy.
6. Create a package to be sent to each owner, this will contain a letter explaining our firewise initiative, the rating sheet, the picture of the property, and a picture showing a compliant lot, resources available to the owner. Initially the request is to remove all dead and down trees on the property. Package to be sent with return receipt.

7. If no reply within three months attempt to contact again. Repeat three times if needed.
8. On failure start procedure to have Village authorized to do the work and charge the owner. Worst case with failure to pay is a lien on the property.
9. Once a property has down and dead trees removed village will work with the owner to make certain the property is fully firewise. This may include but is not limited to thinning and removal of flammable materials. It may be necessary to obtain advice from a qualified forester to carry out this phase.

Large Properties

DEFINE A LARGE PROPERTY over 1acre?

Large properties will be treated according to a plan agreed between the village and the owner. The two largest properties in the village, TSVI and Northside, have already engaged foresters to draw up firewise plans for their properties.

Recommendation

Have council authorize Attorney Baker to work with Firewise to write a resolution based on this plan. Also have staff provide GIS data as needed and have Firewise work with staff for any extra resources.