

Diamond A neighbors:

We're writing to fill you in on some of the activities underway by the Diamond A Emergency Preparedness (EP) committee in the aftermath of the recent wildfire trauma that we and our Sonoma / Napa County neighbors have just gone through. The experience was truly shocking for us all, as it was for local government officials and firefighters. Happily, for us here in Diamond A, we stayed safe – but now, as we reflect, it's important for us as a community and as individual property owners to take stock and apply new lessons.

The Diamond A EP committee has for the past couple years been offering residents planning materials and other resource information related to protection and 'being ready' for localized fire, storm or earthquake events. However, the recent fires have sent a clear, unmistakable signal – we simply can't be too aggressive in improving the kinds of planning and preparation that will help save lives and property in face of a significant wildfire!

Here are a few of the initiatives we're beginning to develop, and in some cases put in place:

- **Emergency information resources:** This past event activated and made us aware of many important information sources that most of us hadn't utilized in the past, both for staying abreast of fire locations and for getting accurate evacuation warnings. We are compiling a succinct, accurate information resource list for you and plan to make this available before the December holidays.
- **Vegetation management and property 'hardening' against fire:** The EP committee will be investigating with CalFire and other resources a way we can support an active property inspection / assessment program for Diamond A, with a goal of providing each property owner with recommendations and ideas for making their homes more resistant to fire. This will be a critically important initiative for the entire neighborhood!
- **Routes for leaving Diamond A in emergency:** This has been an ongoing topic for residents, and one with no ideal answer. Currently, there is only one way to leave Diamond A, and that is by Grove Street. The EP committee has initiated an effort to explore all other possibilities, even if remote, in an effort to create options. While ultimately there may not be any other possibilities, we're committing to thoroughly investigate until we have a definitive answer for you.
- **Fire 'hardening' lower Grove Street:** Recognizing the importance of Grove for leaving Diamond A, the EP committee has initiated an effort to coordinate with

the County and others to improve firebreaks and other mitigating features along Grove below Canyon.

- Improving the Diamond A equestrian trails as effective firebreaks: These easements, which cross through much of the neighborhood, have the potential of providing important firebreak that could save property in event of fire. The EP committee will be working with the DANA board to determine how we can affect maintenance of the trails in a way that will optimize firebreaks for the neighborhood.
- Neighborhood communications: We currently have a couple of ‘google groups’ for Diamond A – the EP committee is now examining the practicality of establishing some form of group information distribution solely for the purpose of ‘emergency’ communications.
- Seasonal awareness: We’ve put in place a go-forward plan to raise awareness every Fall at the advent of ‘high fire’ season. Hopefully what we just experienced won’t repeat, but every September / October are our most dangerous months with the combination of dry conditions and high, dry winds. In advance of the 2018 season the EP committee is exploring ways to effectively monitor conditions and provide the neighborhood with early warning of developing fire risk levels.
- Continuing education: We’ll be scheduling another ‘Fire Fair’ for June 2018, hoping for a high turnout and broad interest. Our plan for the fair is to bring together representatives from firefighting, fire protection, and emergency services agencies to provide residents with as much helpful information as possible, and to provide a forum for asking questions.

We live in an idyllic mountain setting in California, and most of us wouldn’t trade our location for anything. But wildfire is a clear and present danger in the Northern California hills, and we all have a responsibility to our families and to our neighbors to be prepared, be protected, and be ready to react!

Bob Shokes, Joe Lieber and Dave Duncan

DANA Emergency Preparedness Committee