

# SUMMIT COUNTY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

## AND MITIGATION



Wildfire is our community's most serious hazard risk. The mountain pine beetle epidemic caused extensive damage to more than 140,000 acres of forest in Summit County. And we have seen marked increases in our visitation and resident population numbers, with corresponding increases in development and human activity in forested areas. Climate change is making our fire seasons longer, hotter and drier. Together, these factors increase the potential for large, high-intensity wildfires that threaten homes, public safety, infrastructure, water supplies and natural resources.

The good news is that there are proven strategies to reduce our exposure to the threat of wildfire, and Summit County is here to help residents and property owners through a variety of programs and services. It's important to keep in mind that wildfire preparedness and mitigation are team efforts: Taking action protects our own safety, as well as that of our family members and neighbors.

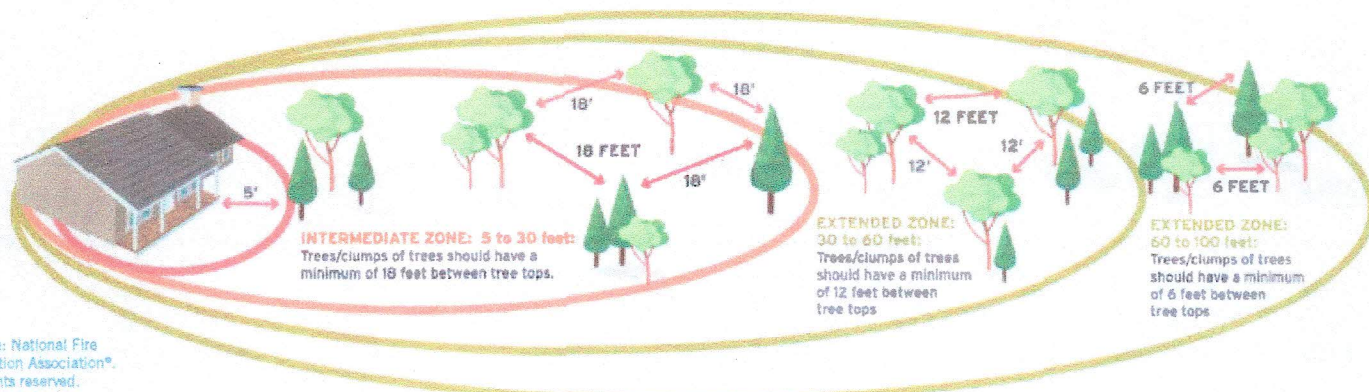
### CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE AROUND YOUR HOME

Defensible space is an area around a home where trees and other flammable vegetation are cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire toward the building. Defensible space creates a safe zone for firefighters to carry out their work, and it reduces the chance that a structure fire will move to the surrounding forest.

**Every home in Summit County should have defensible space.**

### SUCCESS IN WILDFIRE MITIGATION

Summit County is recognized across the West as a leader in community wildfire protection. In 2008, 2018 and 2019, local voters approved or renewed mill levies that provide funding for a variety of wildfire mitigation programs and services, including the Summit County Chipping Program, Hazardous Fuels Reduction Grant Program, Community Wildfire Protection Grant Program and Wildfire Prevention Patrol Program. Collaborative partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service and other agencies have created critical fuel breaks that protect our neighborhoods, businesses and infrastructure. Through the Chipping Program alone, thousands of Summit County residents and property owners have taken concrete steps to protect their homes from wildfire. In 2019, we collected **3,738 slash piles** from **1,931 properties**, resulting in **5,400 cubic yards** of chipped woody biomass that was used for mine reclamation.





## WILDFIRE MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAMS

Summit County's Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) Grant Program offers matching grants to homeowner groups working to create defensible space across multiple properties. Through the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Grant Program, the County offers matching grants for other wildfire projects, such as development of emergency water supplies and improvements to evacuation routes. The CWPP Grant Program includes four categories of projects: Life Safety, Critical Infrastructure, Design/Pre-Engineering and Education.

**Learn more:** [www.SummitCountyCO.gov/wildfiregrants](http://www.SummitCountyCO.gov/wildfiregrants)

## DEFENSIBLE SPACE ASSESSMENTS

Free home-safety inspections are available to residents and property owners through our local fire districts. These voluntary onsite walk-throughs cover many aspects of wildfire preparedness and mitigation for the entire household. Fire district staff offer recommendations and discuss best practices for safety improvements.

**To schedule a free assessment of your property,**  
call Summit Fire & EMS (970-262-5100) or email Red White & Blue Fire at [mitigation@rwbfire.org](mailto:mitigation@rwbfire.org).

## SUMMIT COUNTY CHIPPING PROGRAM

You can create defensible space with help from the Summit County Chipping Program. If you clear flammable vegetation from around your home and stack it in a slash pile, we'll chip it and haul it away for free. Accepted materials include trees, logs and branches up to 12 inches in diameter (no cottonwoods, shrubs, or willows).

**Learn more:**  
[www.SummitCountyCO.gov/chipping](http://www.SummitCountyCO.gov/chipping)



Sign up today to receive critical public safety info during wildfires and other emergencies

## SUMMIT COUNTY ALERT

Local emergency response agencies use Summit County Alert to send emergency notifications by phone, email and text to keep community members informed of events such as wildfires, neighborhood evacuations and floods. SC Alert is also used to communicate non-life-safety information, such as planned road closures, school cancellations, community meetings and utility service interruptions. We strongly encourage all Summit County residents and property owners to subscribe to SC Alert.

**Learn more:** [www.SCAalert.org](http://www.SCAalert.org)

**Stop a wildfire before it starts.**  
**Learn how:** [www.summitcountyco.gov/wildfire](http://www.summitcountyco.gov/wildfire)



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