



FORESTRY DIVISION



FIREWISE USA™
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

FIREWISE

Call (501) 580-9607 with any questions or email Firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov

- **The Firewise USA program is a wildfire safety, education, and prevention program partnered with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division.** It is one of the most successful chapters in the United States, thanks to funding from the U.S. Forest Service, assistance from Forestry Division staff and hard working volunteers. The Forestry Division has worked with more than 300 communities and all the state parks. We help tailor prevention and education efforts to the wildfire needs of each area of the state.
- **Individuals, communities, and fire departments benefit from the offered training, education, and resources.**
- **The main messages are:**
 - Homeowners should create defensible space (area directly surrounding structures) so homes are more easily protected from wildfire.
 - Defensible space is: **lean, clean, and green.** A **lean** space has mowed, short grass; trees trimmed of branches six feet from the ground; and maintained landscaping that does not touch roofs or windows. A **clean** space is cleared of debris such as vehicles, yard toys, tools, and other material that could be flammable. A **green** space is free of dead vegetation including leaves, pine needles, sticks and twigs. Aim to have a home surrounded by only healthy, live vegetation because it is less flammable than dead, dry debris.
 - Defensible space acts as a barrier between homes and forested or wildland areas. Consider anything that could transfer fire between homes and surrounding vegetation a wildfire hazard.
- **The primary objectives of the Forestry Division are:**
 - Educate homeowners about the importance of defensible space.
 - Train and educate fire departments and communities about how to prevent wildfires and wildfire damage.
 - Work with communities throughout Arkansas on their Firewise USA education needs.
 - Manage the grant funds and paperwork associated with recognizing participating Firewise USA sites.
- **What can the Firewise USA program do for your community?**
 - Wildfire education for community groups and fire department training sessions. Safety fairs, luncheons, youth rallies, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and other youth groups, volunteer events, clubs, and conventions (no matter how big or small) are excellent opportunities to request informational presentations at no cost. Free newsletters, literature, and programs are available to any civic group or fire department.
 - Fire departments have the greatest incentive to be involved with the Firewise USA program. Being a recognized Firewise USA site helps with ISO ratings, educates about specific wildfire risks of individual houses in the district – and provides grant money, training and support. These grants are only offered to fire departments. A total of \$3,500 is available during the first year and an additional \$1000 renewal grant is available each year after. Firewise USA recognition requirements include completing a community risk assessment of homes in the district, hosting a fire safety education event for the community, completing a vegetation removal project on a home or civic space, and developing a Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan. Forestry Division staff members can help with all steps of the grant process.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How do we start the grant process?**

Schedule a presentation. Presentations can be on a regularly scheduled training night, during a lunch, or any convenient time and location for you. Call 501-580-9607 or e-mail your request to firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

- **What can we purchase with our grant money?**

The first \$1,000 received for completing risk assessments can be spent how the fire department personnel sees fit (as long as money is spent on the fire department). The remaining \$2,500 must be spent on wildfire equipment to aid with mitigation goals. A list of equipment is available at www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/arkansas-firewise/, or email Leslie.foster@agriculture.arkansas.gov for a copy. The Greenbrier Forestry Division office must receive receipts for the purchase of this equipment. The \$1,000 renewal grants can be spent as needed in support of wildfire mitigation efforts.

- **What paperwork is involved?**

To receive funds, volunteer time totals and other forms must be completed along with pictures and submitted to the Greenbrier Forestry Division office. Staff members are happy to help you in completing each of these forms. Forms are available on the website and can also be mailed or emailed to you.

- **How often do the risk assessment surveys have to be completed?**

Once a fire department completes a community risk assessment of homes in the wildland/urban interface, these surveys must be updated every *five years*.

- **When is the deadline for finishing the program?**

There is no deadline to finish program requirements during the first year. Risk assessments, vegetation removal projects and wildfire education projects can take as long as you need during your initial recognition process. **An October 1st deadline is in place for all renewals.** The second year you are in the program, and beyond, you must have all renewal requirements completed by October 1 in order to receive a renewal grant.

- **Who can help with the recognition process?**

Anyone in your community can help with program requirements. Civic clubs, church groups, and the like, are excellent sources of volunteers and can help with education and vegetation removal projects. Invite residents to the Risk Assessment Training so they can help with wildfire surveys. You can include these same residents in completing vegetation removal projects and/or anything related to wildfire training and safety in your area. We encourage local student clubs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to participate.

- **How does our fire department get recognized?**

Once the requirements are met and all paperwork is turned in to the Greenbrier office and processed, Forestry Division staff members can provide or arrange newspaper coverage, town meetings, area-specific literature and/or flyers for any event or project that your department would like to host at no charge. Contact the Greenbrier Forestry Division office to discuss your community's needs.

Firewise New Community Recognition Checklist 2026

State Liaisons: Travis- 501-580-9607, Leslie 501-813-2554

www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/arkansas-firewise/

Firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov

- Contact State Liaisons for an initial presentation of the Firewise USA Program.**
- Form a Firewise Board.**

A Firewise Board is a group of people that meet monthly or quarterly to discuss Firewise projects and community progress; Members may be fire department personnel or community and civic leaders.
- Conduct risk assessments on your homes in the wildland/urban interface.**

Fire Department members work alongside Forestry Division personnel to conduct a community risk assessment. Make a copy for the fire department records and a copy is sent to the Forestry Division Greenbrier office. These assessments help departments identify high fire risk areas
- Create a Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) based on your community risk assessments.**

-The CWPP guides fire departments and communities in creating an emergency contact list, maps and detailed planning to prepare for the event of a wildfire—form is available online or from your State Liaisons.
- Invest one volunteer hour per individual dwelling unit within your site boundaries in Firewise educational and vegetation removal projects.**

-Choose high risk areas in your communities to improve or clean up using fire department personnel, community volunteers, and other civic groups; Remember to take before and after pictures! And – let us help you provide some sort of education to your community about wildfire safety through an open house, public meeting, homeowner’s presentation, newsletter or otherwise. Be sure and ask questions about how to incorporate these projects into what your fire department is already doing in the community.
- Submit recognition paperwork to your State Liaisons.**

-See the website or contact Travis or Leslie for recognition forms, then submit them to the Greenbrier office. We will process your grant and submit your recognition information to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to ensure that your community is nationally recognized.



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2026
Firewise USA® Application

§ Section A — General Information

Site Information:

Site Name: _____
Primary Contact: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone #: _____ Email: _____

§ Section B— Invested at Least one volunteer hour per dwelling unit in Firewise USA Projects During 2026: the value of a volunteer hour is currently \$34.79

Total Number of Volunteer Hours Invested in Mitigation/Education Projects: _____
Total Number of Dwelling Units (Homes): _____
Total Firewise USA Expenditures, including equipment and volunteer hours: \$ _____

§ Section C— Held a Firewise Day During 2026:

Date of Firewise Day: _____

Describe the activity: *(Character limit in the box is 780.)*

Number of volunteers: _____

Number of people attending event: _____

Location of event: _____

Please submit completed paperwork to the Forestry Division's Greenbrier office.

Arkansas Firewise USA Chapter
20 Industrial Blvd.
Greenbrier, AR 72058
Email: firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov



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Firewise Educational Outreach Tracking Sheet, 2026

Project Date:	
Project Location:	
Number of Attendees:	
Project Description: (remember pictures) text photos to 501-580-9607 or email to firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov Send photos anytime.	
Contact Person:	
Telephone:	
E-mail:	
Fire Staff Present:	
<hr/>	
Total Volunteers:	
Total Hours Invested by Each Volunteer:	
Total Volunteers x Hours Invested =	
Total Volunteers x Hours Invested x \$34.79 =	\$
Technical Support Total Hours =	
Hours of technical support x \$34.79 =	\$
Costs Incurred	
Item and cost:	
Item and cost:	\$
Item and cost:	
Total costs Incurred:	
Total:	\$
<hr/>	
Prepared By:	
Date:	
Comments/Notes:	



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Firewise Vegetation Removal Tracking Sheet, 2026

Project Date:	
Project Location:	
Number of Residences Removing Vegetation:	
Project Description: (remember pictures) text photos to 501-580-9607 or email to firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov Send photos anytime.	
Vegetation Removal Estimate in Yards:	
Home Ignition Zone Mitigated:	<input type="checkbox"/> Dwelling Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping (0-100 ft from Home) <input type="checkbox"/> Common Areas
Contact Person:	
Telephone:	
E-mail:	
Fire Staff Present:	

Total Volunteers:	
Total Hours Invested by Each Volunteer:	
Total Volunteers x Hours Invested =	
Total Volunteers x Hours Invested x \$34.79 =	\$
Costs Incurred Item and cost: Item and cost: Item and cost:	\$
Total costs Incurred:	
Total:	\$
Prepared By:	
Date:	
Comments/Notes:	



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Homeowner Yard Maintenance Tracking Sheet, 2026

Project Date(s):	
Address/Homeowner Name:	
Project Description: (Ex: Mowed lawn, removed limbs, raked leaves, etc.)	
How much vegetation was removed? (estimate in yards, square feet, acres, etc.)	<i>*See vegetation estimation key below.</i>
Area(s) where work was completed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Dwelling Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping (0-100 ft from Home) <input type="checkbox"/> Common Areas
Hours spent:	
Prepared By:	
Date:	
Comments/Notes:	

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division and your local fire department appreciate your participation in wildfire risk reduction efforts in your community.

Use the following options to estimate the amount of material removed

	Lawn and Leaf Bag Avg 39 gal bag size *1 cubic yard = 202 gallons	<input type="text"/>	Bag(s)
	Pickup Truck 3 cubic yards avg	<input type="text"/>	Truckload(s)
	Dump Truck 12 cubic yards avg	<input type="text"/>	Truckload(s)
	Roll Off Dumpster/Container 20 cubic yards avg	<input type="text"/>	Dumpster(s)

Stay informed:

For a list of current Burn Bans, Prescribed Burns, Wildfire Danger ratings, visit:
https://www.ark.org/forestry_fire_info/

Report Wildfires:

1-800-468-8834

Report Prescribed Burns:

1-800-830-8015

Firewise USA 2026

www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/arkansas-firewise/

Contact us with any questions.

Travis -501-580-9607, firewise@agriculture.arkansas.gov

Leslie-501-813-2554, Leslie.foster@agriculture.arkansas.gov

Print before and after photos of your education and vegetation removal projects.

Send them anytime via e-mail or text, and we will file them for you, or attach them to this page, or enclose them as separate documents.



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