

Helping Communities Prepare For Wildfires

(NAPSA)—For the nearly 70,000 U.S. communities threatened by wildfires, it isn't a matter of if, but when fire will be a natural occurrence in their ecosystem. Wildfires cost billions of dollars each year in suppression costs and damage to homes, infrastructure, the economy and resources. In addition, wildfires put both civilian and firefighter lives at risk.

But there is help.

The nation's leaders in wildfire mitigation have partnered to develop Fire Adapted Communities, a prefire strategy to help communities at risk of wildfire save lives and reduce risk to homes, infrastructure and resources.

The U.S. Forest Service and the National Fire Protection Association partnered with a coalition of other prominent nonprofit organizations and government agencies to create the Fire Adapted Communities initiative.

The campaign website, www.Fireadapted.org, provides straightforward information on national programs, tools and funding sources to help communities at risk from wildfire prepare for fire before it starts. The program takes a community-based approach, encouraging homeowners, land managers, civic leaders and first responders to take proactive steps to make their communities fire adapted.

The Ad Council has partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to help deliver the Fire Adapted Communities message nationwide. This national public service advertising campaign raises awareness that those living in fire-prone communities must prepare in advance to mitigate wildfire damage when it occurs. The more proactive actions a community takes, the more fire adapted it becomes.

Partnering to Reduce Wildfire Risk

According to U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, the campaign will help individual homeowners

Wildfire embers can travel over one mile

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A new Web portal is available to help communities deal with the threat of wildfires.

and communities safeguard their homes from wildfire threats. Said Tidwell, "We are pleased to partner with the Ad Council and the National Fire Protection Association to help educate communities—especially those next to wooded areas—on simple steps they can take to help protect their property and families when wildfires strike."

A History of Collaboration

The campaign was created pro bono by advertising agency Draftfcb, which has worked with the Ad Council and U.S. Forest Service for more than 68 years, to address the issue of wildfire prevention with the iconic character Smokey Bear and his famous tagline "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires."

Said Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council, "We hope that our efforts will influence property owners and community leaders in fire-prone areas to take the necessary steps to prepare in advance of a wildfire, improving the safety and resiliency of their communities."

To learn more, visit [Fire Adapted.org](http://FireAdapted.org).