

# Estes Valley Fire Protection District Resident Action Plan

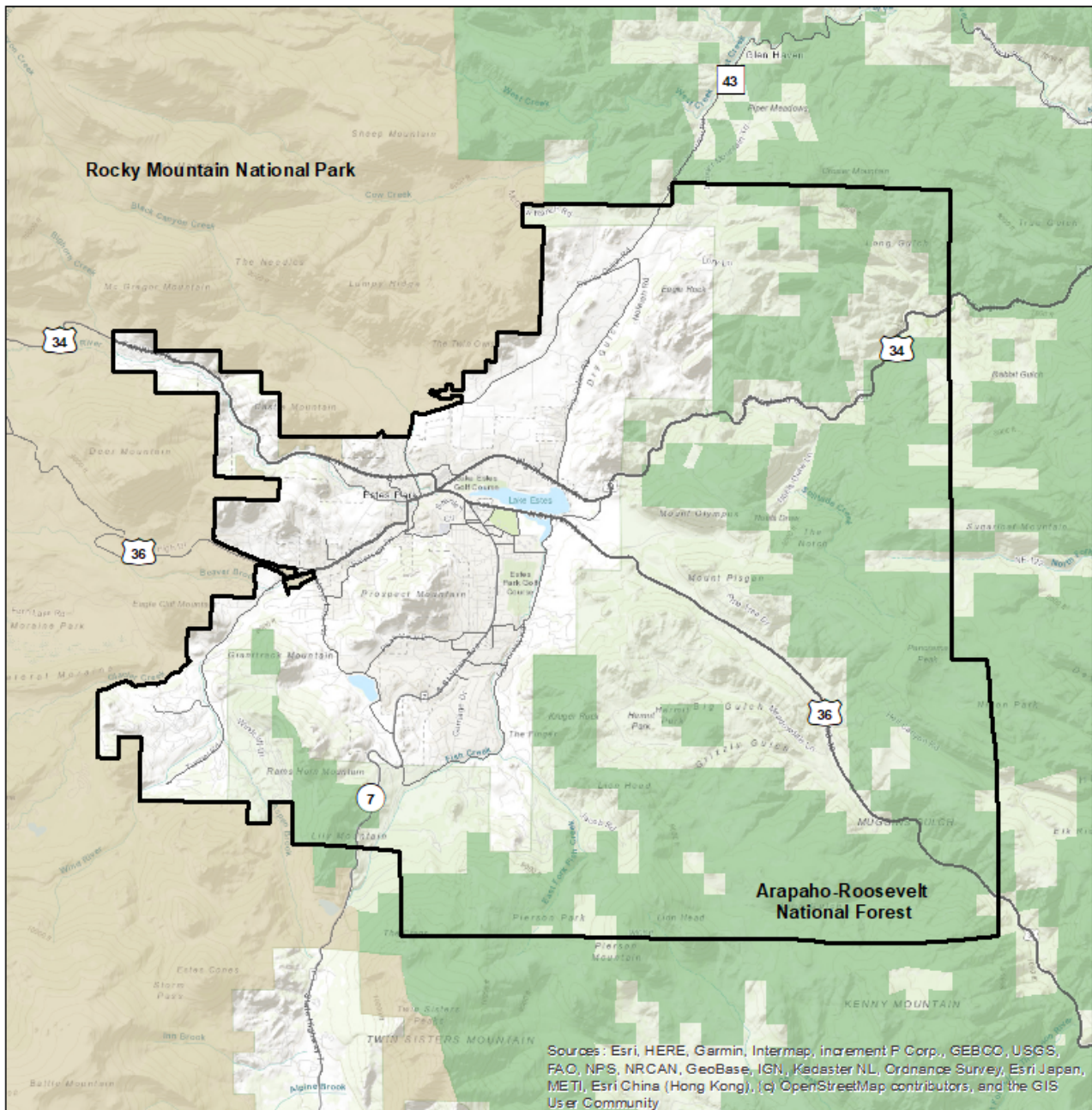


## 2022 COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN COMPANION DOCUMENT

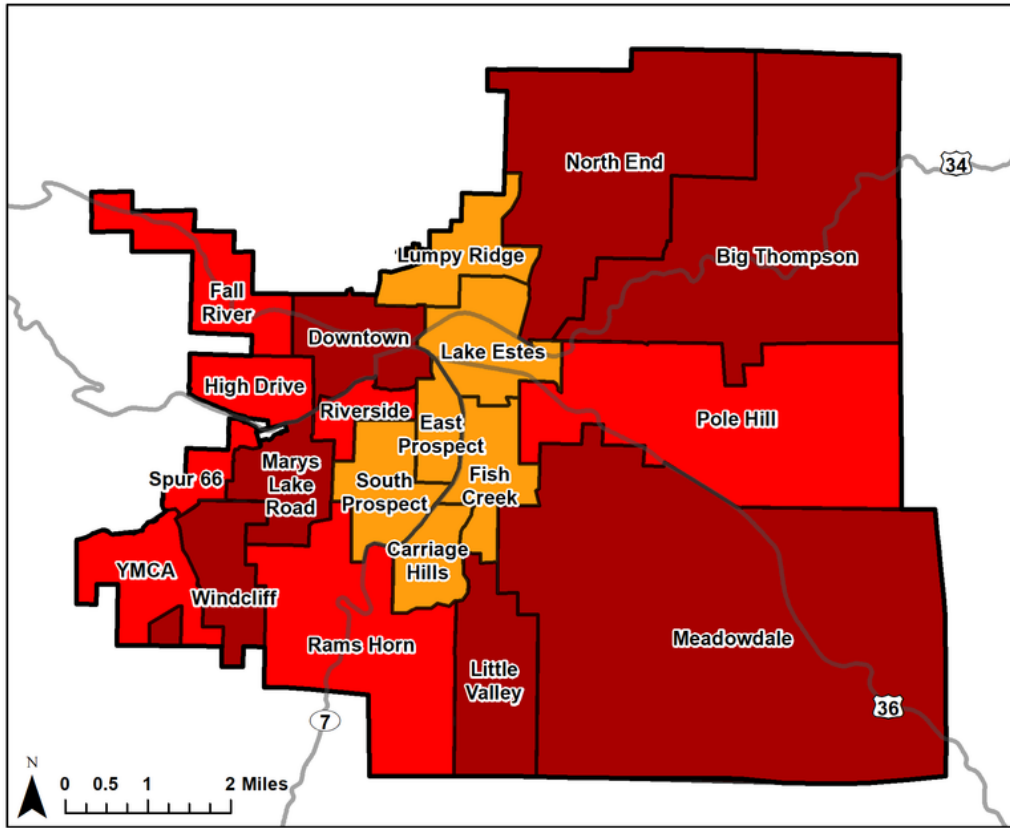
NEXT STEPS FOR RESIDENTS, LANDOWNERS,  
AND COMMUNITIES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF  
WILDFIRE IN THE ESTES VALLEY

# Wildfire Risk

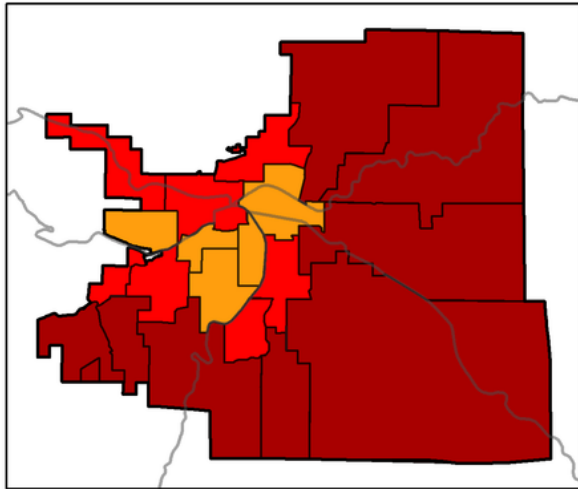
The Estes Valley is at high risk for wildfires that can threaten property, lives, and livelihoods. Some areas of the valley are at higher risk than others, and everyone has different risk factors that affect the ability of their home and property to withstand wildfires. Fire risk was mapped based on community input and scientific modelling. The full CWPP document and interactive maps can be found at [estesvalleyfire.org/living-in-the-wui-wildland-urban-interface](https://estesvalleyfire.org/living-in-the-wui-wildland-urban-interface)



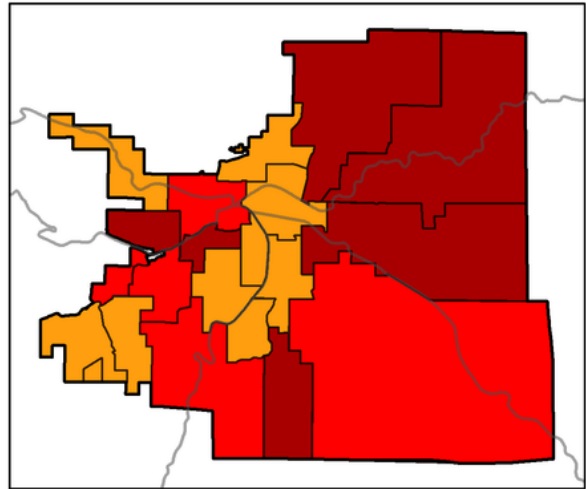
# Overall Relative Risk within Estes Valley Fire Protection District



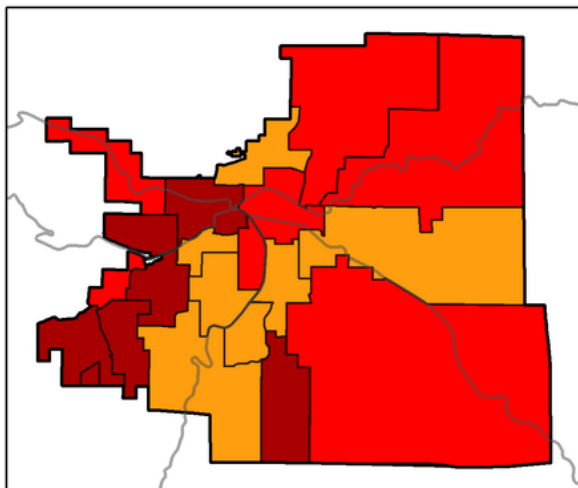
**Fire Risk**



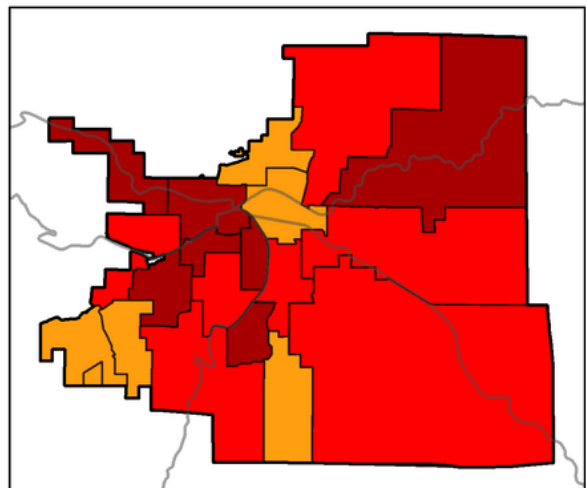
**Suppression Challenges**



**Evacuation Hazards**



**Home Ignition Zone Hazards**



**Relative Risk Rating by CWPP Plan Unit**

Extreme
  High
  Moderate



# Goal

The guiding goal is for the Estes Valley Fire Protection District to become a fire-adapted community, which is a community consisting of informed and prepared citizens collaboratively planning and taking action to safely coexist with wildland fire.

# Process

## Individual Action

Homeowners, residents, and landowners within the valley create defensible space around their homes, harden their homes, and plan for wildfire evacuations.

## Neighborhood Action

Neighborhoods and HOAs pool resources to educate neighbors, mitigate privately-maintained roads, increase firefighter accessibility, and plan connected defensible space and landscape treatments.

## Agency Action

Major landowners, government agencies, and local organizations work with residents and each other to complete landscape-scale forest health and fuel mitigation projects that protect the community.





# Resident Next Steps



## **Defensible Space**

Create space around your home to protect it from flames and embers, and to create space for firefighters to defend your home.

## **Home Hardening**

Build or update your house so it can resist flames and embers in case they do come in contact with your house.

## **Evacuation Preparedness**

Create an evacuation plan with your family and neighbors. Pack go-bags so you are ready to leave immediately during an evacuation order.

# Defensible Space

Goal: Keep fire away from your house

## Zone 1 - The non-combustible zone 0-5 feet from your home

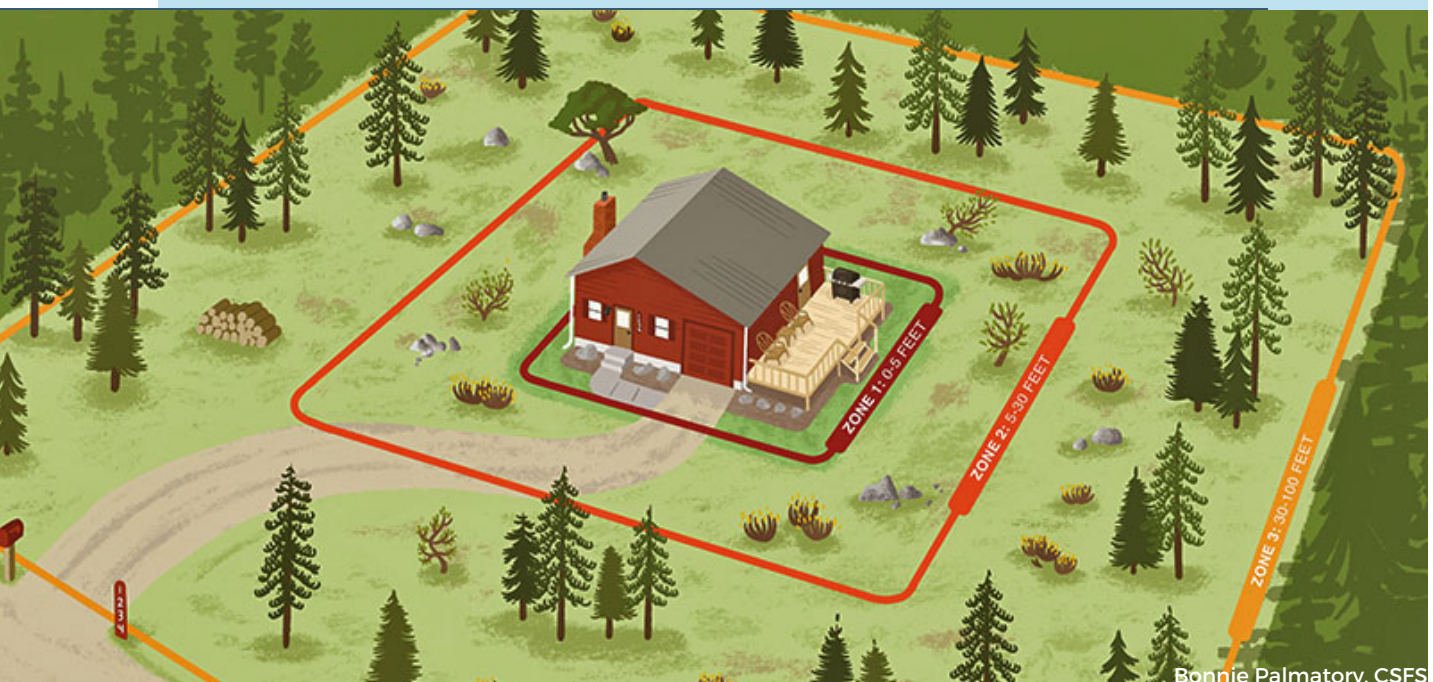
Start your work here - Remove ALL flammable material from 5 feet around your whole house. Mulch, wood fences, wood furniture, firewood, and plants should be removed. Everything in this area should not be flammable.

## Zone 2 - The lean, clean, green zone 5-30 feet from your home

Keep grass and vegetation adequately watered and mowed. Remove all dead plants and woody materials. Any trees or shrubs should be healthy and spaced at least 10 ft apart. Prune trees up 6-10 ft and remove all material below the tree. Remove all junipers.

## Zone 3 - The fuel reduction zone 30-100 feet from your home

Trees should be spaced 10 ft apart, measured at the closest branches. All material below trees like limbs and shrubs should be removed. Slash and flammable debris should be removed or relocated. This is a safe distance to store propane tanks and firewood piles.



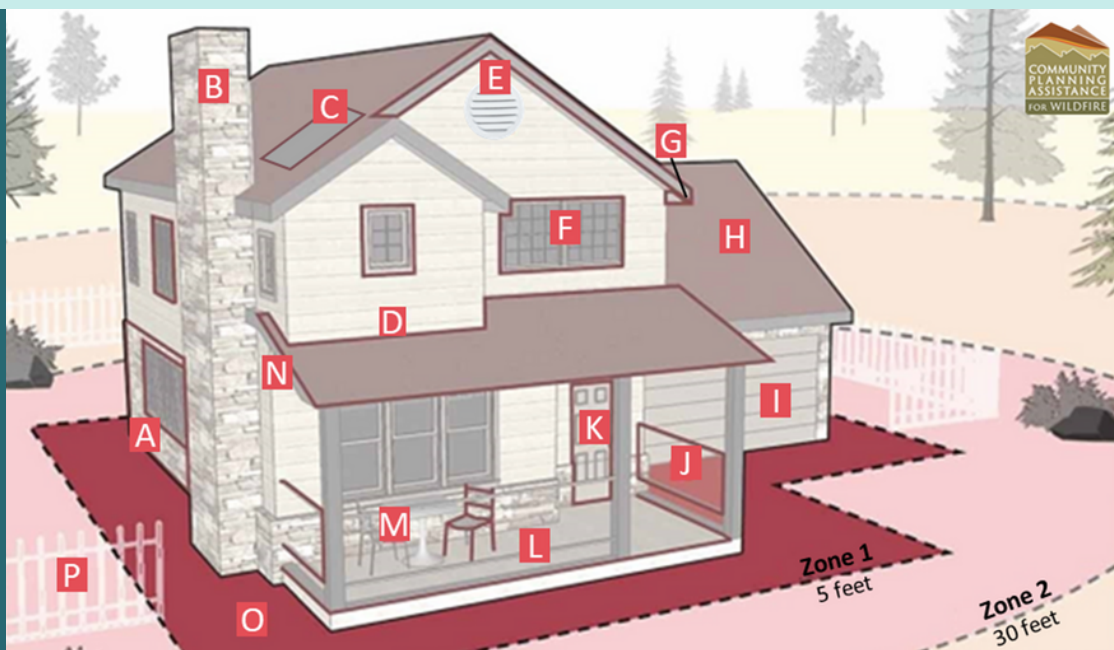


# Home Hardening

Goal: Prevent your house from catching on fire

## Low-cost actions:

- B. Cover chimneys and stovepipe outlets with ½ inch corrosion-resistant metal mesh.
- C. Minimize debris accumulation under and next to solar panels.
- E. Cover vent openings with 1/16 inch corrosion-resistant metal mesh. Install dryer vents with metal flappers and keep closed unless in use.
- G. Clear debris from roof and gutters regularly.
- I. Install metal flashing around garage doors that goes up at least 6 inches on the door.
- J. Use noncombustible lattice, trellis, or other decorative features.
- K. Install weather stripping around and under doors.
- L. Remove combustible materials from underneath, on top of, or within 5 feet of deck.
- M. Use noncombustible patio furniture.
- N. Cover all eaves with screened vents.
- O. Establish and maintain a 5-foot noncombustible buffer around the home.



## Actions to plan and save for:

- A. Use noncombustible siding and trim at least 2 feet up around the base of your home.
- C. Use multipaned glass for skylights, not materials that can melt, and use metal flashing.
- D. Install a 6-inch vertical noncombustible surface on all gables above roofs.
- F. Install multi-pane windows and metal mesh screens. Use noncombustible window frames.
- G. Install noncombustible gutters, gutter covers, and downspouts.
- H. Install ignition-resistant or noncombustible roofs.
- I. Install 1-hour fire rated garage doors.
- K. Install a 1-hour fire rated front and back doors.
- L. Use ignition-resistant or noncombustible decking. Enclose crawl spaces.
- N. Use noncombustible eaves.
- P. Replace wooden fences with noncombustible materials.

# Evacuation Prep

Goal: Be ready to leave when needed, safely, and with confidence

## Plan

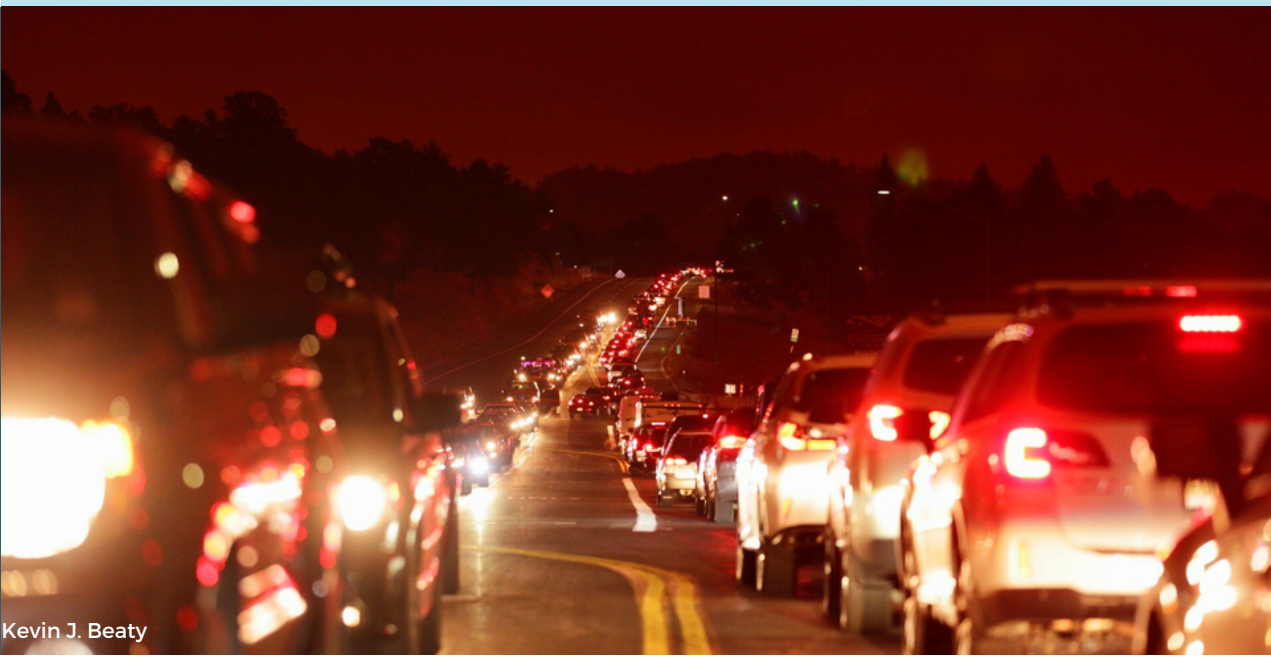
- Create an evacuation and emergency plan with your family. Discuss what will happen with kids, elderly family, and neighbors that may need assistance evacuating.
- Talk to the school, assisted living facility, or other places where family may be to see what their protocols are.
- Plan for evacuating pets and livestock. If you need extra time, always begin evacuating when you receive a voluntary evacuation notice.

## Get Notified

- Sign your family up for emergency alerts at [NoCoAlert.org](http://NoCoAlert.org)
- Sign guests and visitors up for temporary alerts by having them text GO EPALERTS to 888-777

## Pack and Prepare

- Prepare a go-bag with essentials - clothes, snacks, water, emergency contact information, phone chargers, flashlight, etc.
- Include a printed checklist of necessary items around the house to take (medicines, essential documents, urgent pet supplies) and include their locations.
- Update the bag annually based on family needs - extra pet food, infant formula, a few kids games, toiletries, batteries, masks, etc.





# Resources

You must take action, but you do not have to do it alone

## Colorado State Forest Service

Website: [csfs.colostate.edu](http://csfs.colostate.edu)

Phone: (970) 491-8660, (303) 823-5774

Email: [CSFS\\_FortCollins@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:CSFS_FortCollins@mail.colostate.edu),  
[CSFS\\_Boulder@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:CSFS_Boulder@mail.colostate.edu),

## Estes Valley Fire Protection District

Website: [estesvalleyfire.org](http://estesvalleyfire.org)

Phone: (970) 577-0900

Email: [prevention@estesvalleyfire.org](mailto:prevention@estesvalleyfire.org)

## Estes Valley Watershed Coalition

Website: [evwatershed.org](http://evwatershed.org)

Phone: (970) 290-1829

Email: [EVWatershed@evwatershed.org](mailto:EVWatershed@evwatershed.org)

## Larimer Conservation District

Website: [larimercd.org](http://larimercd.org)

Phone: (970) 599-0640

Email: [matt@larimercd.org](mailto:matt@larimercd.org)

## Larimer County Office of Emergency Management

Website: [larimer.org/emergency](http://larimer.org/emergency)

Phone: (970) 619-4903

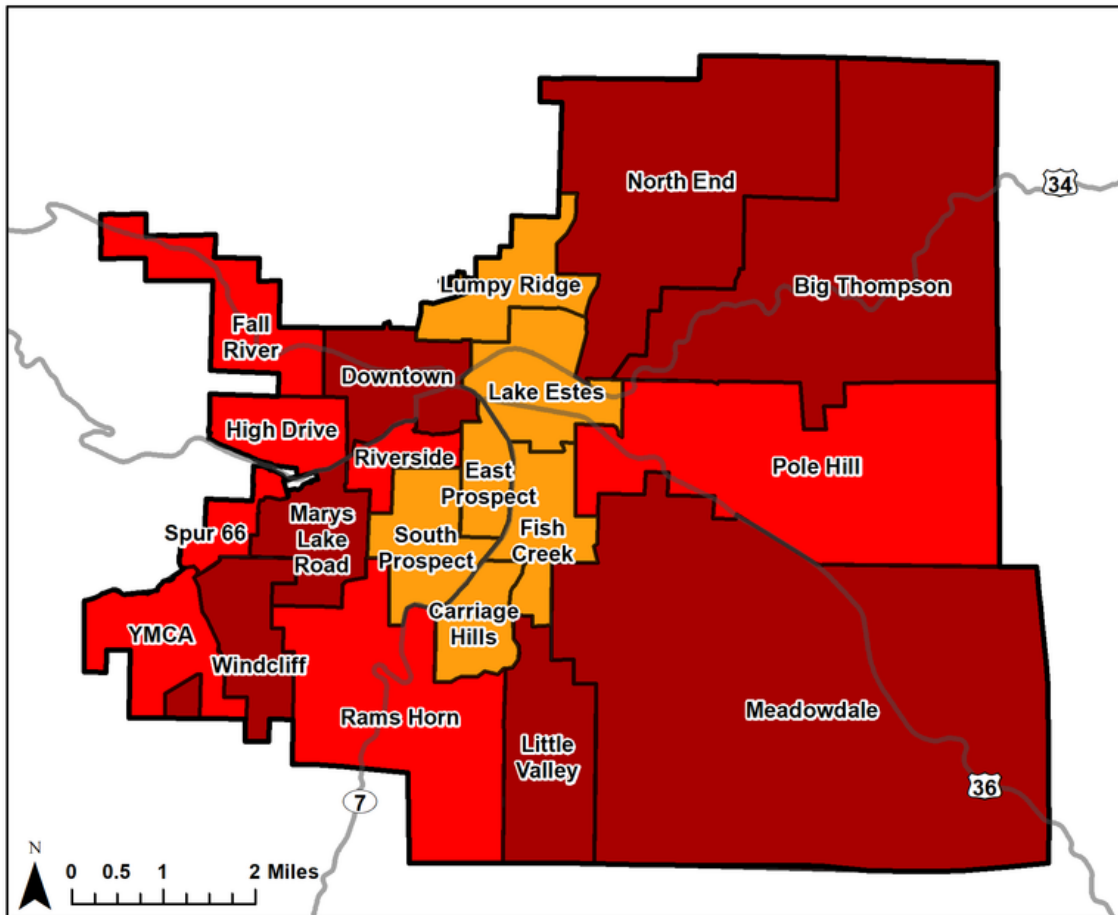
Email: [decatusa@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:decatusa@co.larimer.co.us)



# Plan Unit Priorities

Interactive maps are available online at [estesvalleyfire.org](http://estesvalleyfire.org)

## Overall Relative Risk within Estes Valley Fire Protection District



### Big Thompson - Extreme Risk

Fuels consist of dense, untreated forests on steep slopes, tall grasses, and ladder fuels. There are not adequate hydrants and the river through the canyon is not a reliable water source. Highway 34 is accessible, but almost all of the roads and communities branching off the highway are not accessible by engines. Home construction is generally older and poorly fit to be defended with lots of wood siding and flammable material within 30 feet of the homes. Defensible space is not adequate, bridges across the river do not have posted weight limits and certifications, and the canyon's topography would make fighting a fire in here dangerous to firefighters.

- Set evacuation plans and have go bags for everyone.
- Home hardening, especially for homes existing before the 2013 floods.
- Defensible space
- Remove wood outbuildings and hazards near homes.
- Certify and post bridge weight limits.
- Widen roads and create turnarounds for engines.



### **Carriage Hills - Moderate Risk**

Fuels consist of mostly tall grass and ponderosa pines. There is some regeneration, and lots of shrubs and juniper near homes and under decks. There are adequate hydrants and roads are accessible by engines. Home construction is average with some homes needing to replace siding and remove wood fences near the homes. Defensible space is not adequate, and this unit in particular has a significant amount of homes with firewood, flammable furniture, propane tanks, and junipers within 5 feet of the home.

- Remove firewood, junipers, and wood furniture from on and under decks.
- Mow grasses
- Home hardening
- Defensible space

### **Downtown - Extreme Risk**

The business center has relatively few fuels, but storefronts have wood and shake siding. The Stanley district has good mitigation and newer construction. The other neighborhoods in and around downtown have older construction, more fuel, and little mitigation. There are adequate hydrants and most roads are accessible by engines, but there are a few neighborhoods where they are not. Home construction is varied, but this unit has the fewest class-A roofs in the valley. Defensible space is not adequate.

- Replace with Class A roofs
- Home hardening
- Defensible space
- Linked defensible space

### **East Prospect - Moderate Risk**

Vegetation consists of lots of ponderosa pines that are dense with regeneration along the sides of roads. There are lots of shrubs and juniper in this unit. There are adequate hydrants and roads are accessible by engines. Home construction is not good, many homes have flammable siding and fences. Defensible space is not adequate with numerous ladder fuels and unmowed tall grasses.

- Remove juniper and other shrubs near homes
- Mow grasses near homes
- Home hardening
- Defensible space

### **Fall River - High Risk**

This river canyon has steep slopes and mixed conifer throughout, with aspen and cottonwood nearer the river. There are adequate hydrants and though many roads are accessible by engines, not all of them are. Most of the bridges across the river do not have posted weight rating or certifications. Home construction is average and there are a number of homes with Class B or C roofs and flammable siding and decks. Defensible space is not adequate, and small lot sizes here will require community coordination for functional defensible space.

- Certify and post bridge weight limits.
- Replace with Class A roofs
- Home Hardening
- Defensible space
- Linked defensible space

### **Fish Creek - Moderate Risk**

Properties on the east side of Fish Creek Rd have denser fuels, more slopes, and less mitigation. The west side of the road has the golf course as a large fuelbreak. There are adequate hydrants and roads are mostly accessible by engines. Home construction is overall very good. Defensible space is not adequate, and there are numerous ladder fuels.

- Defensible space
- Home hardening
- Mow grasses
- Remove ladder fuels

### **High Drive - High Risk**

The unit is covered with a grassy understory and ponderosa pine. Most homes in the flatter southern side have good tree spacing and limbing and are at lower risk than the homes further north on the slope. There are adequate hydrants and southern roads are largely accessible by engines, but the northern end of the unit has inaccessible roads without turnarounds. Home construction is average with lots of flammable siding and wood fences near homes. Defensible space is not adequate. The commercial area in the eastern part of the unit is cause for concern with lots of hazardous fuels and materials and concerns about improper storage of these materials.

- Ensure proper storage of all hazardous materials in the commercial area
- Widen roads and create turnarounds for engines.
- Defensible space
- Home hardening

### **Lake Estes - Moderate Risk**

This unit has more commercial business than residential and has little vegetation and fuels. Some residential areas have HOA-managed landscaping with little fuels, and other residential areas have older construction, little defensible space, and lots of litter and tall grasses. Home construction is average with lots of flammable siding and wood fences near homes. Defensible space is not adequate near the residential areas.

- Ensure proper storage of all hazardous materials in the commercial area
- Mow grasses and clear litter
- Home Hardening
- Defensible space

### **Little Valley - Extreme Risk**

This unit has numerous mid-slope homes and significant topographic features that make fire behavior unpredictable. This unit has very dense mixed conifer forests with interlocking canopies and regeneration. There are not adequate hydrants and no other water sources, and some roads further into the unit are not accessible by engines. Home construction is very good, however defensible space is not adequate. The thick vegetation, steep slopes, deep and hidden home locations further into the unit, and the single road in and out of the neighborhood makes for a dangerous place to live and to fight fires.

- Set evacuation plans and have go bags for everyone.
- Defensible space
- Roadway treatments
- Linked defensible space
- Landscape-scale mitigation on the southeast side



### **Lumpy Ridge - Moderate Risk**

Vegetation consists of mixed conifer with a grassy understory, where some locations have been thinned and limbed and others have been left alone and need mitigation. There are adequate hydrants and roads are accessible by engines. Home construction is very good. Defensible space is not adequate with lots of ladder fuels and unmitigated ponderosa pine stands.

- Defensible space
- Mow grasses near homes
- Linked defensible space in tighter neighborhoods
- Remove ladder fuels

### **Marys Lake Road - Extreme Risk**

Vegetation consists of dense forests of ponderosa pine and mixed conifers with interlocking canopies, mostly unmitigated. There are not adequate hydrants or water sources and some roads are not accessible by engines. Home construction is generally poor, with many home having flammable siding and Class B or C roofs and wood fences near the home. Defensible space is not adequate and there are heavy loads of ladder fuels.

- Replace with Class A roofs
- Defensible space
- Home hardening
- Widen roads and create turnarounds for engines.
- Linked defensible space

### **Meadowdale - Extreme Risk**

This unit has numerous topographic features that make fire behavior unpredictable. Vegetation is mostly mixed conifer and grassy meadows with some mitigation work completed. There are not hydrants available but there are some water sources, and not all roads are accessible by engines. Residential home construction is very good. Defensible space is not adequate. This unit is mostly large parcels with few residents, and includes Hermit Park Open Space, which has many cabins for visitors. These wood cabins have propane tanks, fire pits, and large trees within 30 feet of the cabins and slow dirt roads, making for a potentially dangerous situation for unknowing campers.

- Hermit Park buildings need defensible space and home hardening to any extent possible.
- Landscape-scale mitigation
- Roadway treatments

### **North End - Extreme Risk**

Vegetation is primarily montane meadow with tall grasses and some densely forested hillslopes. There are some hydrants but no additional water sources, and roads are accessible by engines. Home construction is average, with many homes having flammable siding. Defensible space is not adequate.

- Mow grass near homes
- Thin forests on hillslopes
- Home hardening
- Defensible space

### **Pole Hill - High Risk**

This unit has numerous topographic features that make fire behavior unpredictable. Vegetation is mostly dense mixed conifer with interlocking canopies and a grassy understory with ladder fuels. There are some areas with hydrants, and many roads are not accessible by engines. Home construction is average with many homes that have flammable siding. Defensible space is not adequate, there are ladder fuels, shrubs, and other hazards near many homes.

- Widen roads and create turnarounds for engines.
- Set evacuation plans and have go bags for everyone.
- Home hardening
- Defensible space
- Linked defensible space

### **Rams Horn - High Risk**

Half of the unit is flat, open meadows with tall grass and well-spaced trees, the other half is forested hillslopes with heavy litter loading. Some stands have been mitigated and some have not. There are not adequate hydrants, but roads are accessible by engines. Home construction is very good, excluding the Cheley Camp buildings. Defensible space is not adequate, and there are lots of ladder fuels.

- Defensible space
- Mow Grasses
- Home hardening of Cheley Camp buildings

### **Riverside - High Risk**

Vegetation consists of dense ponderosa pines which is well mitigated on the north side of the unit and not mitigated in the south side of the unit. There are not adequate hydrants and roads are not all accessible by engines. Home construction is average with some homes with flammable siding and wood fences by the homes. Excluding the mitigated neighborhoods on the north side, defensible space is not adequate, and may be some of the worst in the district.

- Defensible space
- Linked defensible space
- Home hardening
- Reduce ladder fuels and litter loads

### **South Prospect - Moderate Risk**

This unit has numerous topographic features that make fire behavior unpredictable. Vegetation is varied, with some well-mitigated ponderosa pine stands and mowed grasses near homes in some flatter areas and dense, unmitigated regeneration in others. There are not enough hydrants available but roads are generally accessible by engines. Home construction is average. Defensible space is not adequate, and there are lots of ladder fuels.

- Defensible space
- Home hardening

## Spur 66 - High Risk

This unit has many topographic features that make fire behavior unpredictable. Vegetation is mostly mixed conifers with some mitigation but lots of dense and unmitigated stands with ladder fuels and many shrubs near the homes. There are adequate hydrants but some roads are not accessible by engines. Home construction is average. Defensible space is not adequate, with ladder fuels and vegetation near homes, and there are other hazards near homes such as propane tanks and waste.

- Set evacuation plans and have go bags for everyone.
- Defensible space
- Home hardening
- Widen roads and create turnarounds for engines.
- Reduce ladder fuels and litter loads

## Windcliff - Extreme Risk

Vegetation is mostly tall grasses with treated forests near the bottom of the hills and denser forests near the top. There are no adequate hydrants or other water sources, but roads are generally accessible by engines. Home construction is generally very good. Defensible space is not adequate, considering the slope and slow roads to evacuate. Mitigation work has been done lower in the neighborhood, but further up the vegetation gets more dangerous.

- Set evacuation plans and have go bags for everyone.
- Defensible space
- Linked defensible space

## YMCA - High Risk

The unit has mostly tall grass, sagebrush and shrubs, and ponderosa pine. The center of the unit is well mitigated but the outer edges, including the southwest corner, are not well mitigated. There are no adequate hydrants or other water sources, but roads are generally accessible by engines. Building construction is very good. Defensible space is not adequate, but is closer than most units, and ladder fuels are less dense here.

- Set evacuation plans and directions for visitors in place.
- Defensible space
- Mow grass

## Ready to work together with your community?

Contact your local Neighborhood Champion, or become the neighborhood champion for your community. Contact the EVFPD: [prevention@estesvalleyfire.org](mailto:prevention@estesvalleyfire.org)

Neighborhood champions are leaders in HOAs and neighborhood that work with their neighbors and the Estes Valley Fire Protection District to educate neighbors and get community mitigation actions underway.



You can be a part of the Estes Valley  
becoming a fire-adapted community.

# What will your next step be?



Estes Valley Fire Protection District  
[estesvalleyfire.com](http://estesvalleyfire.com)

