

## SVEA Firewise Committee Communication Report

The current wildfires in Southern California, and the Smoke in the summer has heightened our awareness of fire in the mountains and forests of the Wood River Valley and particularly Elkhorn. The SVEA Board of Directors has formed the Firewise Committee to communicate and work with the owners and fire personnel to educate owners on strategies to mitigate and hopefully prevent wildfires in our neighborhood.

### Fire Resources Currently Available in Elkhorn, SV City, Blaine County, and State Level

1. Three full-time (24/7) firefighters at the Elkhorn Fire Station located on Arrowleaf and Morningstar roads.
  - a. From the Elkhorn Station, they also manage the North Blaine County Fire District which includes fire stations at Greenhorn and Griffin Butte. There are residences for firefighters at both the Greenhorn and Griffin Butte Stations.
  - b. When there is a fire all three stations are notified via beeper and respond as needed.
2. One full-time (24/7) EMT and/or Paramedic stationed in Elkhorn.
  - a. This group includes six paramedics and one now in school. These individuals are trained in Advanced Life Support (ALS).
3. There are thirteen (13) career staff firefighters and twenty-seven (27) paid on call firefighters who all live in Blaine County.
4. There are six (6) firetrucks at the Elkhorn Fire Station, four (4) at Greenhorn, three (3) at Griffin Butte, and two (2) located at the Sun Valley City Hall.
5. There are three (3) ambulances stationed in Ketchum with one available full-time (24/7), staffed by 2 to 4 professionals which respond to calls in the City of Sun Valley, including Elkhorn.
6. Full time Fire Chief in the City of Sun Valley –  
Taan Robrahn 208-622-8234 [trobrahn@sunvalleyidaho.gov](mailto:trobrahn@sunvalleyidaho.gov)
7. Full time Fire Marshall in the City of Sun Valley –

Reid Black 208-622-8234 [rblack@sunvalleyidaho.gov](mailto:rblack@sunvalleyidaho.gov)

- a. Fire Marshall Black coordinates with Fire Chief Robrahn, fire station, City of Sun Valley, Police, Blaine County, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), and the State Fire Agency.

8. Full time Blaine County Disaster Coordinator

Chris Corwin 208-859-9618 [ccorwin@co.blaine.id.us](mailto:ccorwin@co.blaine.id.us)

- a. Chris Corwin coordinates and manages all county disasters. There are current plans (to be updated spring of 2025) for evacuation in emergencies (wildfires), zones to be evacuated, evacuation routes, and communication with residents. Chris also watches weather and wind patterns, and coordinates planning with all affected persons and agencies.

- b. Chris Corwin is the chair of the Local Emergency Planning Committee along with Reid Black and vice chair.

- i. Website: [www.co.blaine.id.us/161/About-US](http://www.co.blaine.id.us/161/About-US)

1. This website details planning for evacuation, time, routes, and where to meet.

2. Look at the preparedness link, at the bottom of the page is the code red sign-up button code.

9. These three (3) are very knowledgeable, as are the firefighters in the City of Sun Valley on the management of wildfires. They are continually updating their knowledge and skills of individual and wildfire fire control.

10. There is currently a progressive system in place of City, County, State, Great Basin Region (Southern Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Northern Arizona) and Federal Government (National Interagency Fire Center) to respond to wildfires in our area.

- a. The local regions can use Type 1 Crews (large aircraft and complex incident management teams) as they see fit for suppression of wildfires

<https://southidahodispatch.us/dispatch/> - South Idaho Dispatch

[www.gacc.nifc.gov/gbcc/](http://www.gacc.nifc.gov/gbcc/) - Great Basin Coordination Center

[www.nifc.gov/](http://www.nifc.gov/) - National Interagency Fire Center

11. There is currently a communication system in place through AT&T and Verizon to notify residents of wildfires, their progression, containment, evacuation protocols and routes, etc.  
[www.public/coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/58D579DB8746](http://www.public/coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/58D579DB8746)  
- Code Red Notification Sign-Up
  - a. SVEA Owners and the guests must sign up for alerts to take advantage of this system (Code Red). Many folks disable alerts on their cell phones and must remember to activate them in case of emergencies through the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS).  
<https://www.co.blaine.id.us/795/Code-Red-Alerts>  
[www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system](http://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system)
12. The City of Sun Valley and District (which include the area from the Heatherlands to Galena) work closely with all fire departments in Blaine County and Law Enforcement. There is a written mutual agreement in place with our fire and law enforcement to work together.
13. The Insurance Service Organization rates fire protection across the United States.
  - a. The City of Sun Valley rates as number three (3) with #1 being the best and #10 being the worst. This puts the City and Elkhorn in the upper level of fire protection – the best in Blaine County and one of the best in Idaho. The rating includes proximity to fires, water supply, and average response time.

## Recent History of Wildfires in the Wood River Valley

August 2007 – Castle Rock Wildfire: Burned 48,000 acres. Burned to the backside of Bald Mountain – turning on the snowmaking system and constructing a fire break saved Seattle Ridge Lodge.

No lives were lost, and no structures were burned in this fire.

1,000 – 1,700 Firefighters fought the fire.

August 2013 - Beaver Creek Wildfire: Burned 115,000 acres. Burned up from Hailey to west side of the Big Wood River where it destroyed 2 houses – 1 in Golden Eagle and 1 in Greenhorn.

Much of the burned forest can be seen today on the south side of Greenhorn Road, beyond Warm Springs and to the west from the top of Bald Mountain.

No lives were lost in this wildfire.

1,800 Firefighters fought the fire.

## Looking to the Future – What Can Be Done to Decrease the Loss From Wildfires

The leaders and fire personnel in Elkhorn, the City of Sun Valley, Blaine County, the State of Idaho, and the Federal Government are very interested in promoting and education all of us in knowing Firewise and good practices for our homes and condominiums in Elkhorn.

They have been available for years to help prevent fires and wildfire. They have come to information and educational meetings in Elkhorn on many occasions. Unfortunately, Owners in Elkhorn have not overwhelmed the meeting.

[www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) – How to prepare your home for wildfires

[www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfires/firewise-USA](http://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfires/firewise-USA)

[www.idahofirewise.org/](http://www.idahofirewise.org/)

<https://ibhs.org/wildfire-demo-2019/> - Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety

Taan Robrahn, Reid Black, and Chris Corwin have been very responsive and have a great desire to help us in Elkhorn. They have explained Firewise practices including how to prepare your home for wildfires – including removing brush near home, trails, roads, and open spaces in Elkhorn. Eliminating wood shake roofs (insurance companies will likely require it soon), overhanging trees near roofs, densely spaces tall trees, wood fences attached to buildings, firewood next to houses, combustible items beneath decks and in gutters, and installing soffit and under patio/deck screens.

They have applied for a \$250,000 grant for fuel mitigation about homes and from public access corridors in Elkhorn.

They also wish to educate SVEA Owners, Condo HOA's and property managers on local Firewise practices for their properties. They can also come to individual properties when time allows them to help with this process. In addition, they have offered to have SVEA members attend Firewise classes this spring to learn the details in order to pass this knowledge to the community. Pamphlets and posters regarding Firewise information can be obtained at the Harker Center.

How to prepare your home for wildfires.

Taking control of your wildfire risk.