HAWAIʻI-FIREWISE

Supporting fire-prone neighborhoods across Hawaiʻi in their risk-reduction efforts

About the Program
- HWMO's flagship program for neighborhood-level action
- First site in 2004 (Kohala by the Sea)
- Program went statewide in 2014 (10 sites)
- In partnership with NFPA and State Div. of Forestry & Wildlife (with support from FD's)

Participation
18 nationally recognized communities across the state, 23 in the application process (since Aug 2023), dozens more in the community-building phases

HWMO Support
- Community hazard assessments
- Hosts a Firewise Network
- Access to resources, financial assistance, experts

hawaiiwildfire.org/firewise-program
Firewise is a framework to help residents get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and communities.
Steps to achieving national recognition

1. Organize it!
   - Create a board or committee of volunteers, including residents and partners
   - Collaborate with local wildfire expert to complete a community wildfire risk assessment

2. Plan it!
   - Develop a three-year action plan based on the site’s risk reduction priorities
   - Updated every 3 years in the portal

3. Do it!
   - Host a minimum of one wildfire risk-reduction or educational/outreach event
   - Meet the minimum wildfire risk reduction investment (the equivalent value of one volunteer hour per house)

4. Tell us about it
   - Create a Firewise USA® Portal account and submit an application to your state Firewise USA liaison
   - http://portal.firewise.org
HWMO & DLNR-DOFAW support HI's Firewise communities

- Coordinate hazard assessments for new sites
- Provide assistance with new and renewal NFPA applications
- Provide program updates and share resources on a regular basis
- Provided tailored support to Firewise committees
- Connect our sites to national, state, county, and other local efforts

When funding is available

- Offer workshops/trainings (technical and community-building)
- Facilitate learning groups around topical areas of interest
- Offer financial assistance/reimbursements for community mitigation efforts
Perks of joining your Firewise Committee

- Community-building (new friends) :)
- Help determine community risk-reduction priorities
- Support neighborhood-level mitigation and educational projects
- Be part of the Hawaiʻi-Firewise Network and Big Island-Firewise ʻOhana (regular meetings and a Google Group listserv for learning and sharing)
- Be part of the group that decides how mitigation funds get spent