

From: FireSafe Occidental firesafeoccidental@gmail.com
Subject: Update on Free Chipping Service
Date: June 14, 2020 at 12:38 PM
To: bburnett@sonic.net



Fire Safe Occidental June 14, 2020 Newsletter

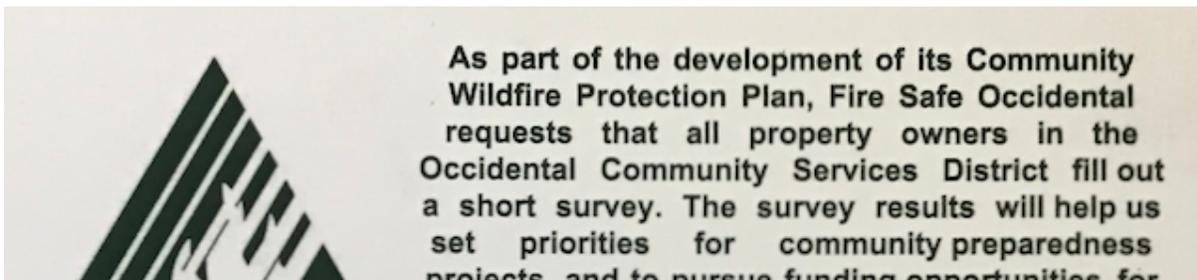


Before our important update on free chipping service, we would like your help

Our Wildfire Protection Plan Survey postcards have now been in property owners hands for several weeks and many of you have already filled out the survey online, but not all of you!

This is your final chance to get online and fill out the survey for your property so we have your input on priorities for our area. Please make sure you have filled out this important survey.

Occidental Owner's Survey





projects, and to pursue funding opportunities for those projects. This survey will take you five minutes or less, but the information we gather is vital to planning our future work in the community. Please complete the survey as soon as possible. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE!

Please access the **Community Survey** through our website:
FireSafeOccidental.org

If you do not have Internet access and need a hard-copy version please contact Carolyn Sell at: (707) 479-1439

IMPORTANT UPDATE on Sonoma County Free Chipping Service

As many of you are aware, Sonoma County offers a free chipping service for the county residents to reduce fuel loads in fire-prone areas. For the last several months, FSO has been working to get a better understanding of how the program is administered and how FSO can make the program more accessible for our community.

Recently, FSO proposed to County Fire Chief John Williams that FSO could help the program be more efficient and have more benefit for our community if we organized properties within our 16 "Neighborhood" structure. Chief Williams was receptive to our proposal.

He offered us a 2-3 day period in mid-late July with the possibility of another 2-3 day period later in the summer. He also advised us that he has secured grant money to potentially provide additional chipping days for FSO neighborhoods. FSO has already identified two neighborhoods (#16-Joy Ridge & adjacent roads and #1-2-3-- Harison Grade and adjacent roads) that have brush piles ready for chipping. The county chipping program runs from mid-May through October (depending on how long the funds hold out). Since they received an additional \$70K this year, it may run longer into the fall.

In addition to the specially allocated days for Occidental residents, we have an additional way to get more chipping done in Occidental. We are aware that many of you are reluctant to create piles for chipping

are aware that many of you are reluctant to create piles for chipping, leaving them on evacuation routes, without knowing when they will be chipped. However, in order for us to really leverage this program, we need to be proactive at getting these resources to our area in mass, not one at a time. Chief Williams indicated that if we can provide him specific coordinated information, we may be able to get additional chipping services.

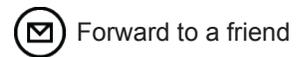
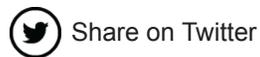
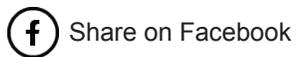
In order for FSO to coordinate this effort, we need your help. Specifically,

1. The County requires that anyone who wants to participate in the program must sign up [here](#). *Please carefully read all the guidelines regarding the preparation of the piles.* Note: The county wants your piles ready for chipping when your application is made which is why they ask for pictures.
2. Once you sign up, send us your name, address, and your chipping sign-up number to carolynsell@gmail.com. With this information, we will work with the county to get a larger number of our properties chipped this year.
3. While the county program takes jobs on a "first come, first served" basis, the scheduler may also include properties further down the list if they are in the same geographical area for efficiency purposes. Our lists will help them prioritize groups of neighbors ready for chipping.
4. Approximately one week before the chipping crews come out, the County will send someone to inspect all brush piles. If a pile does not meet the county's specifications, it won't be chipped. However, if the county inspects another area elsewhere and finds unprepared properties, we can potentially get one of our Occidental neighborhoods inserted as a replacement with our detailed neighborhood list of applicants.
5. FSO will work with the county to let neighborhoods know when to expect chipping work to be done.
6. This county program leaves the chipped wood on each property.

While we can't guarantee that once you create your pile and submit your application, the work will be done, we do believe we can get more work done in this coordinated fashion than each of us applying separately and hoping for the best.

In addition, FSO will continue looking for other resources to assist all of us in removing fuel loads from your property. The lists we create through this county program will be useful in us securing other resources.

We welcome your comments on this or any other way we can help serve our community to be more resilient.



Stay safe and keep in touch. Fire Safe Occidental is always looking for people who can get involved or ideas you may have about how we can best serve our community.



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