



# The Sunshine Fire Protection District Newsletter

## Letter from the Chief By Chief Steve Waltman

I have several things to share in this newsletter: we received a big grant for safety equipment; the Bubonic plague and Tussock moths are in Sunshine; prepare for wildfire by weed whacking around your house and having an evacuation plan; get your chimneys inspected for winter and buy a chimney fire extinguisher from us.

Sunshine's application for a 2014-15 Colorado Firefighter Safety and Disease Prevention Grant was approved! We were awarded \$109,882 to replace our very old Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units and to purchase new bunker gear. SFPD Board of Directors member Alan Kirton was primarily responsible for writing and submitting this application. We are very grateful to him for enabling us to get this desperately needed safety equipment.

Those of you on the Sunshine email list have already seen these next two warnings, but I think they are worth repeating:

First, although it is rare for people to become infected by the plague, Boulder County's only confirmed case of plague since 1993 was contracted by

a Sunshine Canyon resident. This infection is transmitted by fleas carried by rodents. Prairie dogs have been spotted in our canyon and Gold Hill, and they are commonly infected. Recently dead chipmunks have been found by many of our residents, and the Boulder County Health Department has tested them and confirmed that they are also infected. (The Health Department asked me to pass on to you all that they do not need to test any more chipmunks. At this point, there is no doubt that they are carrying the plague.) If you have outdoor pets, you should discuss flea control measures with your vet. While the plague can be treated with antibiotics, it is critical to begin the treatment promptly. Of the four people who have become ill from this disease this year, two did not survive. Symptoms usually develop 1 to 6 days after infection. They include high fever, extreme fatigue, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches, and sometimes painful swollen lymph nodes or pneumonia.

Second, the Four Mile Creek Drainage area of our district is home to another kind of plague: Tussock moths. They are devastating the Douglas Fir trees, and the caterpillars can cause irritation and rashes.

While Colorado has had a quiet wildfire season this summer, our big fires are typically driven by wind and several of Boulder County's major wildfires have occurred in the fall: Fourmile Canyon Fire, September 6; Walker Ranch Fire, September 15; Overland Fire, October 29; Old Stage Fire, November 24.

Unfortunately, having had one disastrous fire did not make us immune from future ones. One simple way to improve the survivability of your home is to trim the grasses and weeds around it and along your driveway by mowing or weed whacking.

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CWPP Committee Update -  
By Abby Silver

**SHADED FUEL BREAK- 4300 area of SCD:** We continue to thin along our community roadways. Our 2015 project is scheduled to begin in mid-September and go through October and will create a shaded fuel break along the shared driveway across from Bald Mountain. Both private and state lands will be involved and we have been working with the Colorado State Forest Service to define the work to be done on state land. Funding will come from CWPP tax income, a federal matching grant through the CSFS, a state matching grant from Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant program and landowner contributions of 10%. Thanks again to Alan Kirton for securing the matching grant and for project managing!

**COMMUNITY CHIPPING PROJECT – SAVE THE DATE: October 26-30.** Free curbside slash chipping has been very popular and highly successful in the past. Funding will come from SFPD’s CWPP fund, and a \$3000 chipping grant we were awarded by the county. *An opportunity to register and detailed information will be emailed to everyone in September.*

**ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING :** We will have our annual planning meeting for 2016 projects in January or February of 2016. This will be announced by email much closer to the time. All are welcome!

**SIGN PROJECT UPDATE –** We have reinstalled all the signs that we noticed were missing or damaged. If you still need/want a sign, or something has happened to your existing sign since our last survey, please contact Abby abberoo@msn.com and/or Henry moregrins@yahoo.com .

**FALL CHIPPING**  
Mark your calendar: October 26-30.

Please feel free to contact me with any input or project suggestions.

Abby Silver  
CWPP Committee Chair  
abberoo@msn.com

**\*Wildfire Partners Receives \$1 Million Grant**

Wildfire Partners – a voluntary program for Boulder County homeowners who want to prepare for wildfire – has been awarded \$1.125 million by FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Sunshine FPD partnered with Boulder County on this application and Sunshine residents are eligible to take advantage of this funding.

Launched in 2014, Wildfire Partners provides technical and financial assistance to homeowners and increases the insurability of participating homes. The FEMA funding is in addition to a \$1.5 million grant received from the Colorado Department of Natural Resources.

Sunshine’s Abby Silver is one of the Wildfire Partners Wildfire Mitigation Specialist. If you are accepted into the program, you can request Abby to conduct your home assessment. Homeowners who have had difficulty obtaining insurance should consider applying to Wildfire Partners. The program’s certificate is recognized by Allstate, State Farm and USAA Insurance. A number of other insurance companies have accepted the certificate on a case-by-case basis.

To apply to the program, visit [www.WildfirePartners.org](http://www.WildfirePartners.org)

## Adoption of the 2012 International Fire Code by Fire Marshal Bruce Honeyman

In April 2015, the Board of County Commissioners adopted and signed the Commissioners' resolution approving the Sunshine Fire Protection District's (SFPD) adoption of the 2012 International Fire Code (IFC). This simple statement does not give justice to the hard work over a number of months by the Sunshine Board to agree on the adoption language.

Why, then, all of the effort to adopt a fire code? The Sunshine Fire Protection District is a 'special tax district' for funding our operations but, prior to the Code's adoption by the SFPD, we had no authority to regulate many fire safety conditions of particular interest to our District residents. For these things we needed to rely on, and defer to, the County. For the most part, we have had an amicable relationship with County fire code officials, i.e., those who have some jurisdiction over our District. By far, our primary interactions with the County on code issues dealt with site plan review considerations such as driveway standards (including turnarounds, road grade and so on), water supplies and defensible space. Generally, we have been able to come to an agreement with the County on specifications but we had no enforcement capability if builders failed to carry through with the agreement or the County altered its requirements. The Fire code gives us enforcement capability. Additionally, the District now has the ability to enforce general safety provisions and we have authority over fire service features (e.g., fire apparatus access roads, water supplies, etc.) for which we previously had no control. For example, several years ago, we were alerted to a property with several hundred feet of electrical cord connecting several outbuildings while running through dried grass and across access drives. Although this was clearly a dangerous situation for fire ignition, we did not have the direct authority to require the owners to remove the wiring. Our only path was to get the County involved. The Fire Code now gives us the authority to directly mitigate such potentially dangerous situations.

What are the general provisions of the 2012 International Fire Code? First and foremost, the IFC describes the relationship between the Fire Department (i.e., the SFPD), the Fire Code Official, who is its representative, and those things and activities within the special tax District that are of interest to us for safety concerns. This is the 'Scope and Administration' portion of the code. It describes how we should conduct 'business' with respect to the above including the issuance of permits, requirements for documentation from builders, the issuance of fines and a procedure for appealing decisions made by the code official. Other 'general' sections include 'Fire Service Features' (e.g., requirements on premises identification, water tank installation for firefighting and emergency responder radio coverage), General Safety Requirements and Building Services and Systems. Because we have no commercial structures in our District some of the Fire Code requirements are moot at this time.

Another important section is 'Fire Protection Systems'. As many of you may know, new residences that are constructed are required by the Boulder County Building Code to have residential fire suppression systems installed. The adopted code includes provisions for fire department (FD) connections (i.e., the ability to connect a fire engine to the residential sprinkler system) and interior and exterior alarm notifications should a fire sprinkler activate. We have been recommending the FD connections and notification systems but now, with the passage of the fire code, we can require them to be put into place in new construction.

For the most part, the adopted 2012 International Fire Code will have little direct impact on currently-established residences. However, there are four operations that will now require a permit:

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## Adoption of the 2012 International Fire Code by Fire Marshal Bruce Honeyman – Continued from page 3

1) LP gas tanks (a single tank or in aggregate) that exceed 1,000 gallons of water capacity (how the volume of the tanks is determined); 2) **any** open burning, including campfires on private land; 3) the removal of private firefighting cisterns from ‘service’; and 4) temporary membrane structures and tents having a area in excess of 400 sq. ft. Two of these permitting requirements need some additional explanations:

*Open burning:* Subsection 105.6.30 of the 2012 IFC was amended to read as follows: ‘A current operational burn permit from Boulder County is required for the kindling or maintaining of an open fire or a fire on any public street, alley, road or other public or private ground. The permit must be provided to the code official of the District before burning commences and notification of the burn must be provided to the code official the day before or day of the intended burn. Notifications, instructions and stipulations of the burn permit and those of the District shall be adhered to.’ This section of the IFC was amended to include recreational fires in the permitting process. Although the County does not require a burn permit for recreational fires, **we** (the Sunshine fire Protection District) **do**. Why is this the case? Campfires or other recreational fires have an exceptional potential for fire ignition. Furthermore, District residents are highly attuned to wildfire potential and the smell of smoke. As a consequence, we are often called out to investigate reports of smoke and if it is a purposely-set fire, we want to know, whether it’s for burning slash or roasting marshmallows. If you desire to have a recreational fire, the Fire Code Official of the District will inspect the proposed burn site and issue a permit. You need to notify both Boulder County Communications and the Fire District of the date and time of your fire. You must also heed all restrictions specified by the open burn permit.

*Private fire hydrants:* Subsection 105.6.35 of the 2012 IFC. If you have a cistern for fire suppression that was required as part of the site plan review process, that cistern is expected to remain in service (e.g., in good working order, full of water with no modifications to vehicle access) in perpetuity. We are establishing a program for yearly inspections of the cisterns to make sure that they are in service. We rely on these water supplies when making tactical decisions regarding firefighting operations and, as such, they must remain available to us. If a cistern is to be removed temporarily from service for repairs or other circumstances, you must get a permit from the District. Part of the conditions of the permit is an agreed-upon specific time at which the cistern will be returned to service.

In addition, three activities explicitly require construction permits: 1) automatic fire-extinguishing (e.g., sprinkler) systems; 2) emergency responder radio coverage systems; 3) temporary membrane structures and tents having an area in excess of 400 sq. ft.

The adoption of the 2012 International Fire Code by the District was based on the belief that it will help us make Sunshine a safer place to live and visit. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at [bdhoneyman@gmail.com](mailto:bdhoneyman@gmail.com).

### **RECREATIONAL BURN PERMIT:**

To obtain a recreation burn permit please contact Bruce Honeyman through email, [bdhoneyman@gmail.com](mailto:bdhoneyman@gmail.com) at least a week prior to the burn. Once a permit is issued for a designated site it will be good for a year. The day before the burn please notify Bruce or Chief Waltman with the date and time of the fire.

## SFPD and Neighboring Department Collaboration Success Story

On August 3rd, Gold Hill received a tone for a structure fire at 9:39 PM. Seven of SFPD firefighters responded, saw some action, and lost some sleep. Gold Hill appreciated our presence. There were six agencies in total - Boulder Mountain, Boulder Emergency Squad, Four Mile, Gold Hill, Left Hand, and Sunshine. Lots of trucks and a ladder was used! More importantly the structure was saved.

These out of district calls really help our fire fighters put their training into practice by allowing them to test their skills in a real life situation. It also allows for a better understanding of the strength and weakness of all the departments involved and how to work together to get the job done. Lastly, these extra calls allows SFPD to run, test, and tweak our trucks and equipment.

### Sunshine Fire Protection District's Annual COMMUNITY FEST

Raffle Prizes

Saturday, September 26, 2015

Silent Auction

Live Auction

4 to 8 p.m. at Station #2

Homemade Chili & Beer

Seeking Donations for the Community Fest of new or gently used treasures, services (like babysitting, cupcake baking, sharing your expertise or talent, etc.). Contact Johanna Hurley, [johanna.hurley@gmail.com](mailto:johanna.hurley@gmail.com)

### Fire Chief Report - Continued from Page 1

If we do have a fire and call for an evacuation, remember that things can be replaced, but people cannot, so leave promptly. Packing to evacuate is very stressful, which can make it hard to think, so having a prepared plan to work from can really help. You can find information about preparing for a wildfire at several websites, including [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org) and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

Because of the current El Nino, the seasonal outlook for our region this fall/winter is for above normal precipitation. The fall is a good time to have your chimney inspected to ensure that it is safe and ready

for use this winter. Burning inadequately seasoned wood greatly increases the creosote build-up and the risk of a chimney fire. The threat is real: Sunshine responded for mutual aid to a chimney fire in Lefthand Canyon a few weeks ago. If you do have a chimney fire, call 911 immediately. You should also consider having a Chimfex chimney fire extinguisher available. Ironically, they were unavailable for a few years because the factory burned down, but they are back and we have purchased two cases for our residents. Contact Deputy Chief Henry Ballard, Fire Marshal Bruce Honeyman, or myself to purchase one. The cost is \$15 each.

## Pine Beetle - Boulder County Forest Health Outreach

Fall is the best time to survey for and cut newly infested trees because signs of beetle attack are most obvious in the Fall. Also, material cut in the Fall and Winter will have many months to dry before beetles fly the following Spring/Summer.

Survey for Pine Beetle tips:

**Sign of Beetle Attack #1** Do you see Pitch Tubes? Pitch Tubes are popcorn-shaped sap plugs that are the tree’s natural defense against the attacking beetles.

**Sign of Beetle Attack #2** Do You See Frass? Frass (aka boring dust), looks like sawdust and can be found at the base of the tree or caught in the bark of the tree.

**Sign of Beetle Attack #3** Have You Seen Increased Woodpecker Activity on a Tree? Woodpeckers become more active when there is an evident food source of bark beetles and other insects.

**Sign of Beetle Attack #4** Is the Tree Fading from Green to Brown? Tree Fade location and time-of-year can help determine which species of beetle attacked.

If you want to keep logs as firewood, take these steps:

**Step #1** – “Cut down infested tree” remove the limbs and haul them to a community forestry sort yard, community chipping event or chip on-site.

**Step #2** – “Score the logs” by cutting furrows lengthwise down the entire log every 3-4 inches. Cuts don’t need to be too deep, just cut through the outer bark to the “white fleshy” cambium layer. This step speeds up the drying of the logs.

**Step #3** – “Buck (cut) the logs” into firewood sized pieces

**Step #4** – “Split the logs” and stack firewood in single rows, facing southwest, in the sunniest spot possible, with bark facing the sun. Do not stack the firewood in large piles.

**Alternative:** After step # 3, don’t split the bucked up logs. Instead, place them in single rows facing southwest in a very sunny location. Logs must be rotated every couple of months to optimize sun exposure.

The goal of this treatment is to rapidly dry the logs and kill the developing larva before they fly next summer. If you use this method, you should start treatments soon to take advantage of remaining warmer fall days.

For photos and more detail regarding Pine Beetle please see the Boulder County Forest Initiative Field Guild for “Bark Beetle Inspector Identification & Treatment Field Guide” on the Boulder County Website:

[www.bouldercounty.org/doc/forest/barkbeetlefieldguide.pdf](http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/forest/barkbeetlefieldguide.pdf)

### Service Announcements:

- **SunshineCanyon Yahoo Group** - Join this group to send a notice, report a lost pet, inquire about local services, and read ads from neighbors selling freezers, grills, rugs, cabinets, etc. Don't be left out of important Sunshine news and info! Look for email with instructions for joining.
- **Turn out the night lights, please.** - Dear Sunshine neighbors: I’m sure that many of you have noticed how many lights there are on in Sunshine in the evening, even late into the night. It’s particularly astonishing when cresting the hill at Bald Mountain heading to the West. Maybe it’s the loss of trees that is revealing lights that were hidden before the fire. But, please, if you can, turn off your outside lights when it’s time to turn in for the night. We have a gift of dark skies in Sunshine, let’s keep it that way.
- **Septic Pumping** - To prevent issues remember to have you septic tank pumps every 3 years.



**SFPD OFFICERS**

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**COMMUNITY WILDFIRE  
PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP)  
COMMITTEE**

CWPP Chair - Abby Silver  
(303) 442-1253 abberoo@msn.com

Website: [www.sunshine-fpd.org](http://www.sunshine-fpd.org)

**The Sunshine Recovery**

Homes Rebuilt/under construction  
on property destroyed  
30

New Home sites:  
2

Home destroyed 57

**Mitigation Tip:**  
At least twice a year  
clean out gutters to  
remove dead leaves  
and pine needles

**Calendar**

**September:**

- 8 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ station #1
- 10 Medical CE - Airway/Breathing/Cardiology 6 to 8 PM @ station #1
- 12 City of Boulder - Sunshine/Four Mile/Gold Hill Outreach Training Practical - WUI
- 24 Interior Attack classroom 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. @station #1
- 26 Community Fest - 4 PM to 8 PM @ Station #2

**October:**

- 7 Medical CE - OB/Infants/Children 6-8 p.m. @ 4-Mile
- 10 Live Burn in Burn Trailer
- 13 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ Station 1
- 22 Flood 7- p.m. @ Four Mile

**November:**

- 10 SFPD Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. @Station 1
- 12 Medical CE - Medical/Behavioral @ Station 1
- 14 Tyrolean Rescue at Four Mile
- 19 Classroom Car Fire 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. @ Gold Hill

Comments or suggestions for next newsletter contact: Jennifer Lansky at 303.442.2709 or jen@lansky.cc