

FIRE SEASON - CALL TO ACTION

Hello neighbors,

Without a doubt, last year's fire season was incredibly stressful as we watched wildfires ravage our state and local communities. Like many of you, I was on high alert monitoring the various wildfire, emergency, weather, and social media sites to remain as informed as possible.

I recognize that nobody knows my circumstances better

than me and like many in our community, I take my personal situational awareness seriously.

With the fire season upon us, I cannot stress enough how important it is that you make it a priority and get prepared, that you connect yourself with resources to stay informed, and that you stay alert.

These anxious times have created some questions from owners asking, *what is the responsibility of the Gold Mountain Community Services District (GMCS D) when a wildfire occurs near or in our community; what can I expect if there is an emergency in our immediate area, and in some cases, who is going to help me in an emergency or evacuation order?* There are no easy answers to these questions. I believe it is important to understand that living in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), is not the same as living in a suburban area where extensive fire and emergency services exist. It is different here. We have all chosen this spectacular rural spot to reside in but with it comes a different way of thinking about emergencies, reacting to situations, and preparing ourselves; in fact, YOU are your own best resource when it comes to being prepared. I hope the information in this bulletin provides answers to questions and helps clarify the roles of GMCS D and the Nakoma Community Association (NCA) during wildfire and other emergencies in and around our community.

Additionally, I am sharing information with you and asking for ***your immediate action*** in taking the steps necessary to **Get Connected, Stay Informed and Be Prepared**. A link to available and informative resources at the end of this bulletin will assist with your preparedness and staying safe during a wildfire or other emergency. After reading through this bulletin, please feel free to reach out to me if I can assist with questions or to request for our Firewise team to call on you. One of the best ways to learn more is to attend our Firewise meetings that are announced via email and are open to all owners in the community.

Sincerely,

Cary Curtis

Gold Mountain Community Services District ~ Board President
Mobile (916)-747-6584 -or- GMCS D Offices (530)-832-5945

**IMPORTANT AND TIMELY
INFORMATION**
Gold Mountain CSD Bulletin 2021-2
May 5, 2021

SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS:

1. **The Gold Mountain CSD (GMCSO or CSD), is responsible for evacuation notification for the community.**
2. **FACT:** The Plumas County Office of Emergency Services, (OES) under the management of the Plumas County Sheriff issues evacuation advisories, warnings, and mandatory evacuation notices, not GMCSO. GMCSO management WILL NOT be notified directly of evacuation communications from OES or the Sheriff.
3. **GMCSO is responsible for providing the community with information and updates regarding wildfires and other emergencies.**

FACT: GMCSO does not receive privileged or first-hand information from fire officials about wildfires or other emergencies that may impact the community and the CSD is not responsible for providing these communications to community residents and visitors. It is the responsibility of fire and emergency response agencies to provide information through their established communication methods.

4. **Local Fire Agencies will be immediately responsive to wildfires and other emergencies in the community.**

FACT: All local fire protection agencies in Eastern Plumas County are volunteer organizations, operating with limited funds and volunteers. Their primary purpose is to provide structural fire protection and emergency medical services. Supporting each other with mutual aid agreements, these agencies are not tasked with, or equipped for wildfire response. While these agencies will mobilize in an emergency to assist wildland resources with structure protection, in a largescale emergency they are ill equipped to respond to every structure. Of the 2,680 square miles in Plumas County, 1,965 square miles or 75% of the land resides in the jurisdiction of Plumas National Forestry. In the event of a wildfire, Plumas National Forest Service is the responsible agency. CalFire does not have an active firefighting presence in Plumas County but may support Forestry during a major wildfire event.

5. **The CSD's Quick Attack Vehicle and Fire Cadre is responsible for fighting fires on my property.**

FALSE: The QAV and our community volunteer Fire Cadre are in place to respond to small vegetation incidents in the community as a potential first response before other assets arrive. They are not trained to fight structural fires or as medical technicians and will not respond to such incidents beyond coordinating District resources, (e.g., water supplies).

6. **The Gold Mountain CSD and Nakoma Community Association (NCA) are one organization.**

FACT: Your CSD is a local Government organization under California civil code. The GMCSO was formed by the County Board of Supervisors to provide domestic water services, wastewater services, and *structural* fire protection services for the Gold Mountain master planned community. The CSD serves all private and commercial parcels in the community with the services described above. Governed by a Board of Directors comprised of residents registered to vote at an address within the District's service area, your CSD serves in a role similar to an Urban Water and Sewer Department.

The Nakoma Community Association is incorporated as a Homeowners Association (HOA) under California corporation code governing planned residential communities. The role of an HOA is to enforce the rules of the development, take care of community common areas and infrastructure, and preserve property values. The HOA is governed by a Board of Directors elected from property owners (not necessarily residents) of the community.

The purpose and roles of the CSD and HOA are entirely separate while both represent the best interests of the community.


What Fire Protection and Emergency Services Is The GMCSO Responsible For?

- ✓ **Contracted structural fire protection.** The GMCSO fulfills its fire protection responsibilities through contracted fire protection services. Currently the CSD has a five-year contract with Eastern Plumas Rural Volunteer Fire Protection District to provide structural firefighting and emergency medical services for the Nakoma community and Nakoma commercial entity.
- ✓ **Maintaining CSD water and firefighting resources.** During a fire emergency, the CSD has a responsibility to keep water flowing through the system to our hydrants for as long as possible. In a smaller scale event, we have the capability to route water to appropriate hydrants using power provided by our local power company, Plumas Sierra Rural Electric Company (PSREC). In a large wildland fire event where power is no longer available, GMCSO operators will keep the water flowing with both permanent and temporary generators as long as facilities are accessible and generator fuel can be obtained. During a fire emergency, the entire CSD staff will be on task to maintain water flows in the community. CSD staff will not be available to assist homeowners with questions or provide evacuation assistance.

What Is The Local Volunteer Fire Protection Provider Responsible For?

- ✓ Structural firefighting under contract to the CSD
- ✓ Emergency medical services response under contract to the CSD
- ✓ Fire code enforcement within the community and commercial development
- ✓ Support of Firewise initiatives and education
- ✓ Fire protection familiarization training in the Nakoma community and within the ranks of the fire department

What Are Homeowners Responsible For?

- ✓ **DO THIS NOW!!** Sign up for CodeRed -  Code Red Emergency Notification. Directions located in [Informative Resources](#) link at the end of this bulletin. This is the countywide emergency broadcast system generated by Plumas County Office of Emergency Services. This might be the only way you hear of an emergency or evacuation order in our area.

- ✓ Be prepared! Always have your “GO” bag ready. Take time to subscribe to the recommended fire monitoring and weather sites that can be accessed via the link at the end of this bulletin.
- ✓ Attend community Firewise meetings where you will connect with other owners and learn what you can do to be prepared and how to protect your home with defensible space.
- ✓ Joining the *Gold Mountain Fire Cadre*, assist with community preparedness and readiness.
- ✓ **Do not wait!** In a fire emergency if you feel it is time to evacuate then do it. Only you know your individual needs and can assess your situation. Your neighbor’s situation and assessment may be different from yours.
- ✓ Ask questions now and before an emergency occurs. There are many owners in the community who are willing to assist now, they may not be readily able to do so when an emergency strikes.

What Is The Role Of Firewise?

The national Firewise USA® recognition program provides a collaborative framework to help neighbors in a geographic area get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community and to reduce wildfire risks at the local level. Any community that meets a set of voluntary criteria on an annual basis and retains an “In Good Standing Status” may identify itself as being a Firewise® Community. Our community is a Firewise accredited community. Our meetings and agendas have focused on 3 main areas:

- Fire preparedness education
- Evacuation preparedness education
- Information regarding Hazardous Fuel Treatment and Green Waste Pickup

For more detailed information on Firewise programs you can implement for your own household and the steps you can take in a wildfire emergency, please visit [NFPA - Firewise USA®](#)

What Is The Role Of The Fire Cadre?

The Fire Cadre is a group of community volunteers interested in assisting in community preparedness for any emergency. There are no expectations that cadre members will be actively involved in firefighting.

List of Firewise Informative Resources

Click Here: <https://www.gmcscd.org/firewise-informative-resources> to be directed to the CSD website to access a list of fire preparedness, monitoring and communication tools, and sites.