



**Fire Department**

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March 17, 2014

Happy Valley Ranch Homeowners  
Pima and Happy Valley Roads  
Scottsdale, Az 85255  
Attn: Mr. Rudy Frame / VIP Property Management

Re: NAOS and Defensible Space Guidelines for the Happy Valley Ranch Community

Dear Community Members,

The Scottsdale Fire Department (SFD) needs your assistance to help address the defensible space and wildland fire potential in this area of the city. We have completed a quick tour of the community and below is an initial assessment of the area. While it is apparent that several of the homes in this community have begun to address the fuel management concerns, there are still numerous areas along the primary roadways, easements and throughout the adjacent NAOS areas that need additional attention. Scottsdale has some very specific guidelines related to defensible space and NAOS, which will provide the SFD crews with adequate access, help to control the fuel loads and establish needed defensible space around these residential properties.

Below is a brief overview of the fire safety guidelines that need to be addressed in order to reduce the opportunity for a fire incident to spread from the NAOS into the local homes and structures. Additional information can be found in the City's "Wildland and NAOS" and "Invasive Plants" brochures.

- As identified by City Fire Ordinance, it is critical to establish an initial 3ft to 5ft area of space around all rear/outside walls to allow for the emergency access of SFD crews and resources. Create an additional 15ft to 20ft defensible safety zone in these areas and along the primary roadways by removing the dry flash fuels, addressing the abundance of invasive and overgrown plant vegetation, along with removing the dead and down combustible plant materials.
- Removal of any live invasive plants like Desert Broom, Buffel Grass and/or Fountain Grass from the development is allowed, even in the common NAOS areas. These invasive species greatly increase a fire's potential and intensity, along with creating additional challenges for the firefighting crews.
- In these defensible space areas, trim your tree limbs up from the ground for a distance of 4ft to 6ft and remove any accumulation of dead branches, leaves or combustible materials to prevent a small ground fire from burning up into the higher tree canopies. Also, trim back any tree overhangs or branches that come into close proximity with structural eaves or other tree canopies that are adjacent to structures.

The SFD appreciates your cooperation and we will be happy to continue working with your neighborhood to help prioritize the issues, evaluate progress and develop ways to meet the safety and ordinance guidelines that were outlined in this letter. I can be contacted at 480-312-1855, if you would like to discuss any of these issues further.

Thanks for your help, support and cooperation!

Jim Ford  
Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal  
City of Scottsdale Fire Department