

Firewise Community for Lake Camelot

Members of Lake Camelot attended a presentation for the Town of Rome in September 2005 to become involved in a program called Firewise. The Firewise Communities program has best results with participation on a neighborhood or Association level for coordinating fire prevention volunteer opportunities, organizing volunteers and seeing results.

In January, a few board members plus others met again with the DNR and Firewise Interface Specialists and Rome Fire Dept. to determine the advantages and how to proceed with Lake Camelot being recognized as a Firewise Community. The next step was having the LCPOA board acknowledge recognition of a Firewise Board with risk of a small financial contribution if needed.

In March, the board approved formation of such and solicited volunteers to serve on the planning board. Thank you to the 7 (possibly 8) people to get us started. One of the other steps was for the DNR to do an inspection. This was done on March 13 & 14th. The assessment & evaluation report should be available for planning by mid-April.

Firewise Communities/USA is a project of the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Program. Refer to the website www.firewise.org/usa for details in why Firewise Community program would benefit Lake Camelot area. The program is available in fire prone areas with a goal to minimize fire loss by preparing for a fire before it happens.

- Wildland fire staff from federal, state or local agencies provide a community with information about coexisting with wildfire along with mitigation information tailored to that specific area.
- The community assesses its risk and creates its own network of cooperating homeowners, agencies and organizations.
- The community identifies and implements local solutions.

The benefits of becoming involved in the Firewise Community USA Program for Lake Camelot will help us prioritize the areas that should be cleaned up by removing the downed trees and/or dead standing trees. One of our Protective Covenants is very specific in stating the green areas and outlots are to be left in a natural state. The Board is facing a challenge of maintenance of properties with very limited resources. One of the first steps in becoming more fire safe in the Lake Camelot area is to develop an overall plan and have volunteers carry it out.

Each person has the opportunity to participate after a plan is developed. Some may want to help physically while others can be the refreshment crew for a work party. Some may want to just work on their own property. In any case, all work to prevent fire is rewarded. Please stay tuned for updates as we progress in developing a plan for fire safety in Lake Camelot areas. Once a plan is developed, we will be asking for volunteers or asking you to record the time you spend on making your property fire safe.

In addition, the DNR received a \$30,000 grant to allocate resources to the Town of Rome for wood clean up relating to fire prevention. Some of this funding can be used to offset costs in using Town resources.

Watch for the Firewise Display with literature available. We will also have a sign up sheet for volunteers as we progress in this project.