

ANCHORAGE WILDFIRE

Strategic Plan

Education *Reducing the potential for fire ignition*

Strategy 1: Educate landowners about Firewise

- Canvass homeowners with SCA Fire Education Corps & Firefighting Crews
- Distribute printed media
- Advertise Firewise on radio, television, and other media
- Provide Firewise home evaluations
- Provide information to greenhouses on landscaping for defensible space

Strategy 2: Promote community responsibility

- Empower homeowners to mitigate fire risk and hazard by providing information, tree removal assistance, and brush disposal
- Facilitate neighborhood involvement and maintenance of emergency preparedness through Firewise Communities

Strategy 3: Support fire prevention programs

- Augment fire prevention programs within the Anchorage School District
- Increase prevention message through AWARE and Red Cross programs
- Maintain advocacy for safe burning and continue ban on fireworks

Strategy 4: Provide a forum for public participation

- Public sessions for discussion
 - Wildfire website and email
 - Monthly newsletter posted electronically
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Community Assessment *Improving the safety of the community*

Strategy 1: Wildland-Urban Interface assessment

- Develop a vegetation cover type map using satellite imagery. From Ikonos imagery, cover types are classified on the map according to Viereck's vegetation classes for Alaska. These vegetation classes correspond to different fuel models and related fire behavior. Ground truthing verifies the signatures on the imagery.
- Develop a risk map with respect to the cover types, suppression capabilities, and potential for ignition. Incorporate variables with respective weights to specify where areas of extreme, high, and moderate risk exist for wildfire. Factors such as distance to roads and water contribute to the suppression resources available to fight a wildfire.

- Document risk, hazard, and value assessments for communities in MOA and establish recommended fuel mitigation prescriptions and emergency preparedness tactics.

Strategy 2: Fire behavior prediction models

- Fuel load analysis to determine forest stand structure and fuels available on the ground.
- Develop fire behavior prediction models for planning mitigation work and suppression tactics.

Strategy 3: Land Use code review & modification

- Establish Title 21 building codes for new construction consistent with Firewise guidelines and international wildland urban interface code.
- Examine how new and existing developments can accommodate emergency preparedness and Firewise guidelines.
- Gain approval of Municipal Legal Department, Community Councils, Planning and Zoning Commission and Assembly for changes in Title 21 addressing wildfire.

Strategy 4: Maintain a Firewise landscape for Municipal communities.

- Establish a monitoring protocol for regeneration and fuel load accumulations in forested areas.
 - Apply fuel treatment work as needed to maintain a surface fire without contributing to ladder fuels and potential crown fire.
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Hazardous Fuels Mitigation *Reducing the potential to burn*

Strategy 1: Support fuel treatment prescriptions

- Provide technical and financial support to homeowners for removal of forest fuels in the home ignition zone.
- Encourage homeowner and community participation in fuel reduction projects for improved suppression response and reduced wildfire behavior.
- Coordinate fuel treatment activities in strategic locations for protection of life, property, and natural resources.

Strategy 2: Provide for Municipal-wide brush disposal

- Provide roadside brush pick up for special projects and neighborhoods in high risk areas.
 - Establish a long-term biomass disposal or utilization solution for vegetative matter.
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Wildfire Operations *Improving emergency preparedness and response*

Strategy 1: In accordance with NFPA 299.10.4, train, qualify and equip AFD

personnel assigned to a wildfire incident to be able to carry out assignments in a predictable, safe, cooperative and effective manner.

- Develop team of trained wildfire support logistics personnel. Train AFD/OEM staff to S-348 Resource Unit Leader, S-347 Demobilization Unit Leader and S-203 Introduction to Incident Information interagency wildfire standards
- Train AFD Rank Personnel (Battalion Chiefs, Senior Captains, Captains) to interagency wildfire standard for engine operations (S-230 Single Resource Boss and S-231 Engine Crew Boss)
- Increase wildfire behavior knowledge level of AFD personnel to interagency wildfire standards (S-290 Intermediate Fire Behavior, S-215 Fire Operations in the Urban Interface)

Strategy 2: Activate quick response to wildfire events within MOA and including mutual aid resources to the MOA during periods of high fire danger.

- Plan and conduct annual multi-agency wildfire simulation exercises for high risk areas of the MOA with respect to initial and extended attack
- Review and update the AFD wildfire response SOGs
- Preposition helicopter with helitack crew in Anchorage (S-217 Helicopter crew member training)
- Preposition DOF Type II Crew in Anchorage / Eagle River while conducting fuel treatment work

Strategy 3: In accordance with NFPA 299.10.6, prepare for effective and efficient wildfire evacuation plans.

- Create and obtain portable, reflective fire resistant evacuation signs. (NFPA 299.6, 299.10.6.c)
- Review and/or develop the criteria for ordering evacuations due to wildfire threat. (NFPA 299.10.6.a)
- Basic wildfire behavior safety class for police officers. Police Officers will be on the ground evacuating residents in a wildfire emergency. It is important for police officer safety, that officers understand and be able to evaluate rapidly changing wildfire behavior. (NFPA 299.10.4, 10.6.b)
- Emphasize public evacuation pre-planning through public service announcements, publications, media articles and AWARE.
- Develop a policy addressing the issue of persons who remain to protect their property. (NFPA 299.10.6.f)
- Develop a procedure for allowing evacuees to return when the fire threat has passed. (NFPA 299.10.6.g)

- Review Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) for role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and revise to include any special guidelines for wildfire specific emergencies.
- Review how MOA CEMP addresses wildfire and revise/update as necessary.

Strategy 4: Develop a post incident recovery plan to address infrastructure and economic needs after wildfire for both public and private entities.

- Establish guidelines for evaluating economic loss and recovery solutions.
- Develop a plan to address post-fire debris management, air quality issues, soil scarification and erosion, and revegetation.
- Develop long term, post-fire shelter management

Strategy 5: Support effective ingress and egress for a wildfire emergency.

- Evaluate road network for access in and around residential neighborhoods and major access routes.
- Determine the evacuation routes for various communities within the high fire risk areas. Examine incompatibilities between the current road access and evacuation needs.
- Identify roads that will not accommodate fire department apparatus.
- Identify right-of-ways for improvement and/or construction.

Strategy 6: Provide alternative water drafting sites where hydrants are not available.

- Index water drafting sites for AFD resources book.
- Maintain water drafting sites with needed improvements.
- Identify strategic locations for heli-dip sites and tanker shuttles.

Strategy 7: Support recommendations given to AFD by the 2000 TriData audit regarding wildfire.

- Support TriData audit recommendation IV-13:
"The AFD should pursue a vigorous public education effort concerning wildfire prevention, proper construction (i.e., use of fire-proof roofing materials), and vegetation management. The AFD should also teach homeowners in the affected areas about the factors that will be considered during structural triage so that they can take the necessary steps to improve their home's triage rating."
- Support TriData audit recommendation IV-12:
"The MOA should pass an ordinance requiring developers to provide hydrants in all new subdivisions or construction projects in the hillside areas".
- Support TriData audit recommendation IV-5:
"Sprinklers should be required (or strongly recommended) for all new construction on hillside. Incentives might be given for retrofit and renovation."

The AFD is unable to provide a level of service response comparable to the remainder of the city in the Foothills areas of Stations 8 and 10. These areas also have many expensive and large homes. The AFD should encourage existing owners to incorporate sprinklers and other fire safety features in renovations. Additionally, legislation should be passed mandating residential sprinklers for new construction in this hillside area."

Administration

Strategy: Maintain office staff to administer field operations, coordinate operational strategies, and maintain documents & records.

- Employ two foresters and one technical assistant for program administration
- Continue to seek funding for program operations
- Document activities and maintain records