



Starlight Pines Homeowners Association (SPHOA)

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2020 Starlight Pines Firewise Inspections

Dear Starlight Pines Lot Owner,

Starlight Pines is celebrating 13 years as a recognized Firewise USA community. As you may be aware from previous mailings, newsletter articles, and the annual Starlight Pines Firewise Day, we are in the process of an ongoing lot inspection program. In 2017 the Firewise Education Committee volunteers inspected all 612 lots in the Starlight Pines Community, and in 2018 they began a three-year rotation by inspecting lots 1 thru 200. As the second phase of this rotation, the Committee volunteers inspected the “Firewise Compliance” of lots 201 through 400. Starting on June 1 of this year we will be inspecting lots 401-612. For your information, the inspection form, with the inspection criteria on the back, has been enclosed with this letter. All the criteria presented there are very important in making your property as safe from fire as possible; however, there are three criteria that deserve special emphasis at this time. This year the inspectors will be paying special attention to thirty feet of defensible space, thinning of trees, and evidence of bark beetle infestation.

The best defense for any home is a 30-foot perimeter that is free of highly combustible materials. **Dead pine needles burn ferociously; the ground around any structure, woodpile, or propane tank must be raked and all tall dead grass must be trimmed for at least 30 feet – as per item 6 on the inspection form.** It is strongly suggested that easily combustible brush or bushes within five (5) feet of a structure be removed. It is also strongly suggested that any trees within the 30-foot perimeter should be limbed up above the roof edge if at all possible. Any flammable plantings in close proximity to a home are a double-edged sword; a forest fire can cause a house fire, but a house fire can also cause a forest fire.

Insufficient thinning was the one fault that the national Firewise inspection team found with our community during their inspection in 2018. While many lot owners have done a good job of thinning, there is still much to do. Trees crowded together create the ideal situation for crown fires, which can burn at 2,000 degrees. As we saw in the Tinder Fire, flames that hot will destroy a house in a hurry. **If you have many very skinny, pole-like trees, they should be thinned immediately.**

The third high-priority item that the inspectors will be looking for is bark beetle infested trees or firewood. If evidence of bark beetles is found, you will be notified immediately, and you must remove the infested tree(s) or fresh firewood to Bly Pitt as soon as possible. Fines will begin occurring within 30 days. **If the needles on a tree have turned brown or straw colored, the tree is dead or dying. Remove that tree immediately. Do not wait for the June inspection.** Beetles live for about eight weeks, and the trees they manage to enter last for even less. In 2018 some lots lost all or nearly all of their trees. The few beetles that kill one of your trees will produce hundreds of other beetles that can kill numerous other trees while producing thousands more beetles to destroy many other trees, and so it goes. To stop this devastating chain of events, get any dead or dying trees to Bly Pit to be burned ASAP. You will be glad you did and so will your neighbors. **One dead standing tree is allowed ONLY if it has been dead for a number of years and you are sure that it is not infested with bark beetles.**

A forest community like ours depends on all property owners doing their share to create the safest possible environment that will increase our homes’ potential for survival when forest fires do occur. And as your neighbors we greatly appreciate your support in this endeavor.

Firewise Education Committee:

Brian Birtwistle, Larry Butler, Bob Dahlgren, Conrad Davis, Linda Knaeble, Dan Knox, Dave and Pam Ihns, Dave Lutz, Tom & Paula Osterday, and Bill Patterson (Board Liaison)

(See list of contractors on the back.)

List of contractors to help with lot clean-up

This list is for information only. We are not implying endorsement of any business. Property owners must ascertain credentials for themselves.

Doug Lendt 602-228-8032 (cell)

Mike Flood 602-329-0278

Jason -AZ Yard Works 623-551-8733

Jim Clark 602-679-7936

John Foster 602-509-3095

Jerry Smith Tree Pro 928-474-0102

Gilbert Martinez 928-587-7068

Lee Thompson 928-477-2821 Lot cleaning

For removal of large standing trees:

Barry Bozak 928-477-2697 Experienced logger

Chip Dinsmore - Clear Creek Disposal 928-477-2477

Cell: 928-606-6731

Experienced logger

For renting large dumpsters:

Chip Dinsmore - Clear Creek Disposal 928-477-2477